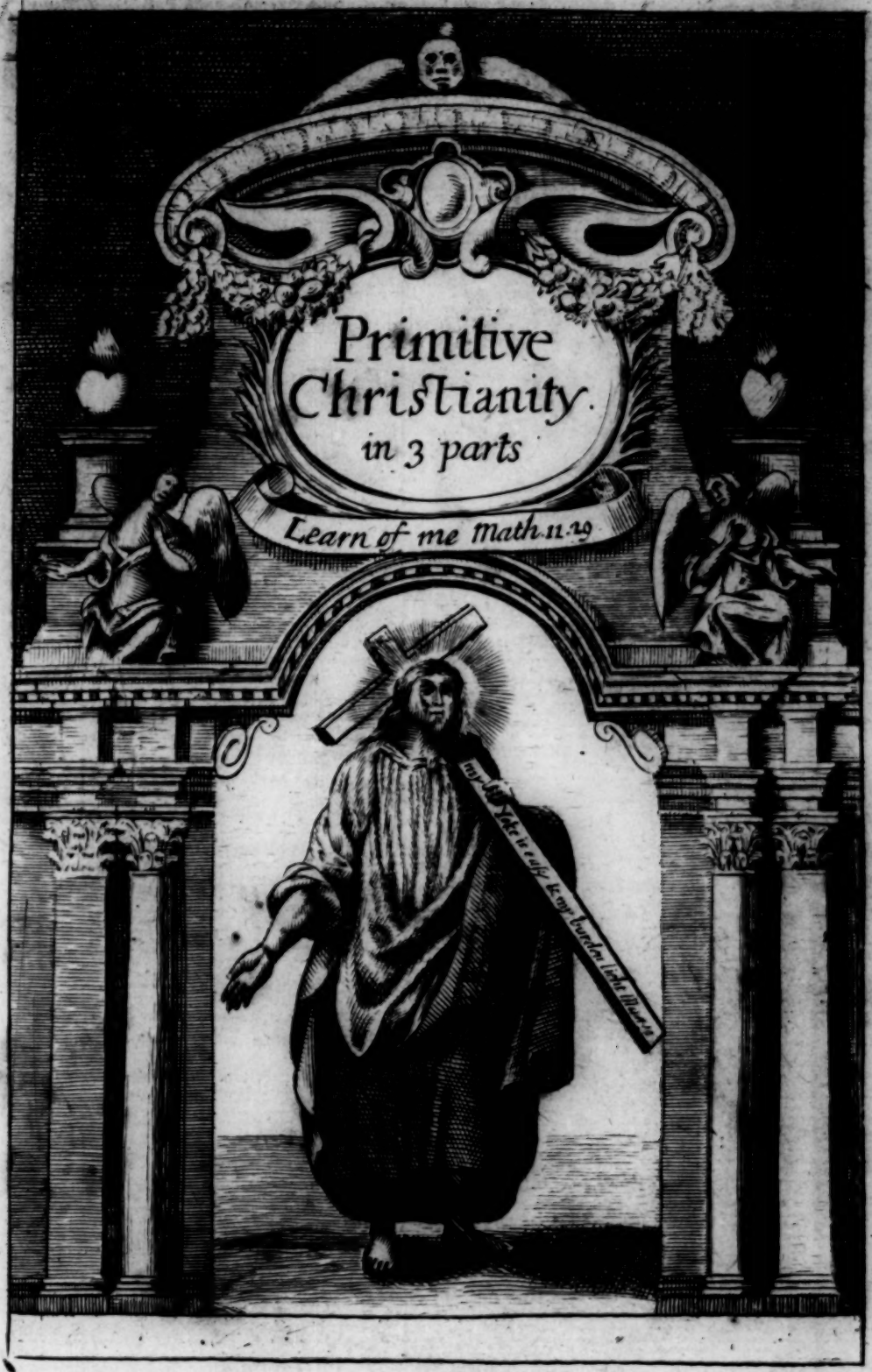

Primitive
Christianity.
in 3 parts
Learn of me Math 11.29

BRITISH MUSEUM

Primitive Christianity:

OR, THE

RELIGION

OF THE

Ancient Christians

In the First AGES of the

GOSPEL.

In Three PARTS.

By WILLIAM CAVE, D. D.

Οὐκ ἐν λόγοις, ἀλλ' ἐν ἔργοις τὰ τῆς ἡμετέρας θεοσεβείας πράγματα. Just. Mart. Paræneſ. ad Græc. p. 33.

Nos non habitu Sapientiam, ſed mente præferimus: Non eloquimur magna, ſed vivimus.

Min. Fel. Dial. p. 31.

The Seventh Edition.

LONDON:

Printed for J. WALTHOE, J. and J. KNAPTON, D. MIDWINTER, A. BETTESWORTH, R. ROBINSON, J. OSBORN and T. LONGMAN, B. MOTTE, and A. WARD.

MDCCXXVIII.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE

Right Reverend Father in GOD,

NATHANAEL,

Lord Biſhop of OXFORD,

AND

Clerk of the Cloſet to his MAJESTY.

My LORD,

WHEN I *firſt deſigned that theſe Papers ſhould take Sanctuary at Your Lordſhip's Patronage, the* Hebrew *Proverb preſently came into my Mind,* Keep cloſe to a great Man, and Men will reverence thee. *I knew no better way (next to the Innocency, and, if it may be, Uſefulneſs of the Subject I have undertaken) to ſecure myſelf from the Cenſures of Envy and Ill-nature, than by putting myſelf under Your Protection, whoſe known* εὐφυΐα, *the Sweetneſs and Obligingneſs of whoſe Temper, is able to render Malice itſelf candid and favourable. Encouraged alſo by this Conſideration, I hardened myſelf into the Confidence of this Addreſs, which I had not otherwiſe attempted, but that Your Lordſhip's Kindneſs and Generous Compaſſion, and the mighty Condeſcenſion*

דבוק לשחוון ישתחון לך

Bereſch. Rab. c. 17. ap. Druſ. Adag. Ebraic. Decur. 6. Adag. 8.

deſcenſion wherewith You were always pleaſed to treat me, (while I had the Happineſs of Your Lordſhip's Neighbourhood) did at once invite and oblige me to it. I ſay no more, leſt I ſhould affront that Modeſty *that is ſo innate to* Your *Temper, or come within the leaſt Suſpicion of* Flattery, *ſo repugnant to my* own.

One thing only there is, which I cannot but remark, the great Honour which Your Lordſhip has done, not to the Epiſcopal *only, but to the whole* Miniſterial *Order, that a Perſon of Your Rank and Education would ſtoop to an Employment ſo little valued and regarded in this Unthankful and Degenerate Age. And herein Your Lordſhip has been a happy Preſident; Your Example being already followed by ſome, and will ſhortly by more, Perſons of Noble Deſcent and Pedigree; a thing for which the* Church *of* England *was never more Renowned ſince the Reformation, than it is at this Day.*

My Lord,

There was a Time within the Compaſs of our Memory, when the Biſhops amongſt other things were accuſed (by one of the Houſe of Peers, tho' one that had not the moſt Reaſon to bring in a Charge of that Nature) to be in reſpect of their Parentage, De fæce Populi, *of the very* Dregs and Refuſe of the People; (*Malice will play at ſmall Games rather than not at all.*) *A Charge as falſe as it was ſpiteful; tho', had it been true, it had been impertinent, ſeeing the very* Order *is enough to derive Honour upon*

Church Hiſt. lib. VI. p. 183.

the

the Perſon, even when he cannot (as Your Lordſhip) bring it along with him. And indeed, ſo Honourable an Order has Epiſcopacy ever been accounted, even when there have been no viſible Advantages either of Riches or Grandeur to attend it, (as there were not in the more early Ages of Chriſtianity) that Perſons of the greateſt Birth and Fortunes have not thought it below them to exchange the Civil Tribunal *for the* Biſhop's Throne, *and to lay down the publick* Rods *and* Axes, *to take up the* Croſier, *and the* Pedum Paſtorale. *If we may credit that Catalogue of the Biſhops of* Conſtantinople, *recorded by* Nicephorus, *we find* Dometius, *Brother to the Emperor* Probus, *and after him his two Sons,* Probus *and* Metrophanes, *ſucceſſively ſitting in that Chair; as afterwards* Nectarius, *S.* Chryſoſtom's *Predeceſſor, was of a* Senator *made* Biſhop *of that See.* Thalaſſus *became Biſhop of* Cæſarea *when he was a* Senator, *the* Præfectus Prætorio (*or the Emperor's* Lieutenant, *one of the higheſt Places both of* Truſt *and* Honour *in the* Roman *Empire*) *of* Illyricum, *and riſing to greater Dignities, being deſign'd by the Emperor for the Government of the* Eaſt. *S.* Ambroſe (*whoſe Father was an* Illuſtrious Perſon, *the* Præfect *of* France) *was made Governor of* Liguria *and* Æmelia, *and ſent thither with* Conſular *Power and Dignity; during which Employment he was made Biſhop of* Milan. Petronius *Biſhop of* Bononia *is ſaid to have been firſt a* Præfectus Prætorio, *and to deſcend*

of

of the Family of Conſtantine *the Great.* Sidonius Apollinaris, *deſcended for many Generations of Noble and Illuſtrious Parents, his Father the* Præfectus Prætorio *of* Gaul, *himſelf Son-in-Law to* Avitus, (*a Perſon of Extraordinary Honour and Employment, and afterwards* Conſul *and* Emperor) *and yet in the midſt of this diſdained not to become Biſhop of* Clermont *in* France. *More ſuch Inſtances I could give, not to ſpeak of Multitudes that were in the middle and later Ages of the Church, eſpecially in our own Nation. But I return.*

My Lord,

I beheld Religion generally laid waſte, and Chriſtianity *ready to draw its laſt Breath, ſtifled and oppreſſed with the Vices and Impieties of a Debauched and Profligate Age; to contribute towards the Recovery whereof, and the reducing things (if poſſible) to the* Ancient Standard, *is the Deſign of the Book, that is here offered to You. The Subject, I aſſure myſelf, is not unſuitable either to Your Lordſhip's* Order, Temper, *or* Courſe of Life; *if my ill Managery of it has not rendred it unworthy of Your Patronage. However, ſuch as it is, it's humbly preſented by him, who is*

Your Lordſhip's

Faithfully devoted Servant,

William Cave.

THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

I Know not whether it may be any Satisfaction to the Curioſity of the *Reader*, to underſtand the Birth and Original of theſe *Papers*; if it be, let him take this Account. No ſooner did I arrive at Years of capable Diſcerning, but I began to enquire into the Grounds of that Religion into which I had been baptized; which I ſoon found to be ſo Noble and Excellent, in all its *Laws* ſo Juſt and Rational, in all its *Deſigns* ſo Divine and Heavenly, ſo Perfective of the *Principles*, ſo Conducive to the *Happineſs* of Human Nature, a Religion ſo *worthy* of God, ſo *advantageous* to Man, built upon ſuch firm and uncontroulable Evidence, back'd with ſuch proper and powerful Arguments, that I was preſently convinced of the Divinity that reſided in it, and concluded with myſelf (and I thought I had Reaſon ſo to do) that ſurely the Diſciples of this Religion muſt needs be the moſt Excellent Perſons in the World. But alas! a few Years Experience of the World let me ſee, that this was the Concluſion of one that had converſed only with Books, and the Reaſonings of his own Mind. I had not been long an Obſerver of the Manners of Men, but I found them generally ſo Debauched and Vicious, ſo Corrupt and Contrary to the Rules of this Holy Religion, that if a modeſt and honeſt *Heathen* was to eſtimate Chriſtianity by the Lives of its Profeſſors, he would certainly pro-

proſcribe it as the vileſt Religion in the World. Being offended hereat, I reſolved *to ſtand in the ways and ſee, and enquire for the good old way, the Paths wherein the Ancient Chriſtians walk'd.* For I could not think that this had always been the unhappy Fate and Portion of *Chriſtianity*; and that if the Footſteps of true Chriſtian Piety and Simplicity were any where to be found, it muſt be in thoſe Times, *When* (as S. *Hierom* notes) *the Blood of Chriſt was yet warm in the Breaſts of Chriſtians, and the Faith and Spirit of Religion more brisk and vigorous.*

Quando Domini noſtri adhuc calebat cruor, & fervebat recens in credentibus fides. Hier. ad Demet. p. 68. tom. 1.

In purſuance of this Deſign, I ſet myſelf to a more cloſe and diligent Reading of the firſt Fathers and ancient Monuments of the Church than ever I had done before, eſpecially for the *three* or *four firſt Centuries*, for much lower I did not intend to go, becauſe the Life and Spirit of Chriſtianity did then viſibly decline apace; nothing as I went along whatever contributed to my Satisfaction in this Affair. Had I conſulted my own Eaſe and Quiet, I might have gone a nearer way to work, and have taken up with what I could have pick'd up of this nature in *Baronius*, the *Centuries*, *&c.* But I could not ſatisfy myſelf (and I preſume it would as little have ſatisfy'd the *Reader*) with Shreds, with things taken upon truſt and borrowed at the ſecond hand. For the ſame Reaſon I made little Uſe of *The Lives of the Saints*, (eſpecially in ſuch Inſtances whereof there was the leaſt Cauſe to doubt) and the Spurious and Suppoſititious Writings of the Fathers, ſeldom making uſe of any but ſuch as are of unqueſtionable Credit and Authority. And becauſe the Teſtimony of an Enemy is ever accounted of great Moment and Regard, I have been careful to add the Teſtimonies that have been given to Chriſtians and to their Religion by the known and profeſſed Adverſaries of the Chriſtian Faith; ſuch as

Pliny,

Pliny, *Lucian*, *Porphyry*, *Julian*, *&c.* more whereof we might have been furniſhed with, had thoſe Writings of theirs againſt the Chriſtian Religion been extant, which the Zeal of the firſt Chriſtian Princes induſtriouſly baniſhed out of the World. What other Authors of later Date I have borrowed any Light from in this Diſcourſe, I have faithfully produced in the Margin. Two Books indeed I met with, which at firſt Sight I well hoped would have wholly ſaved me the Labour of this Search; the one written by a Perſon of our own Nation; the other by a *Florentine* of great Name and Note; but my Hopes were very much fruſtrated in both. For the firſt, I no ſooner looked into it, but found myſelf wretchedly impoſed upon by the Title, his *elder times and Chriſtians* (not to ſay any thing of his Intermixtures of things nothing to his purpoſe) ſeldom reaching any higher than the *middle Ages* of the Church, little or nothing being remark'd of the *firſt Ages* of Chriſtianity, the only thing I aimed at. For the other (which I met not with till I had almoſt finiſhed this Search) I found it miſerably thin and empty, containing little elſe but ſhort Gloſſes upon ſome few Paſſages out of *Tertullian*, from whence I did not enrich myſelf with any one Obſervation, which I had not made before. There is indeed an Epiſtle of *Fronto*'s, the Learned Chancellor of the *Univerſity of Paris*, concerning this Affair; but it contains only ſome general Intimations, and ſeems to have been deſigned by him (as appears from that and ſome other of his Epiſtles) as the Ground-work of a larger and more particular Diſcourſe. But his Death happening ſome Years after the Date of that Epiſtle, cut off all Hopes

A modeſt Diſcourſe of the Piety, Charity, and Policy of elder Times and Chriſtians, &c. By Edw. Waterhouſe, *Eſq*; London, 1655.

Paganin. Gaudentius de vita Chriſtianorum ante tempora Conſtant. Florent. 1639. *quarto.*

De vita & moribus Chriſtianorum, &c. Par. 1660. *quarto.*

Hopes of profecuting ſo excellent a Deſign. Theſe are all that I know of, who have attempted any thing in this Subject, none whereof coming up to the Curioſity of my Deſign, I was forced to reſume the Task I had undertaken, and to go on with it thro' thoſe ancient Writers of the Church; the Reſult of which Search is laid together in this Book.

Whether I have diſcharged myſelf herein to the Satisfaction of the Reader, I know not; ſure I am, I have endeavour'd what I propounded to my ſelf, *viz. A Specimen of Primitive Chriſtianity*, in ſome of the moſt conſiderable Branches and Inſtances of Religion. Here he will find a *Piety* Active and Zealous, ſhining thro' the blackeſt Clouds of Malice and Cruelty; Afflicted *Innocence* triumphant, notwithſtanding all the powerful or politick Attempts of Men or Devils; a *Patience* unconquerable under the biggeſt Perſecutions; a *Charity* truly *Catholick* and unlimited; a *Simplicity* and upright Carriage in all Tranſactions; a *Sobriety* and *Temperance* remarkable to the Admiration of their Enemies; and in ſhort, he will here ſee the Divine and Holy Precepts of the Chriſtian Religion drawn down into Action, and the moſt Excellent *Genius* and *Spirit* of the Goſpel breathing in the Hearts and Lives of theſe Good Old Chriſtians. Here he will find a real and evident Confutation of that ſenſleſs and abſurd *Calumny* that was faſtned upon Chriſtianity, as if it required no more than an *eaſy* and *credulous* Temper of Mind; as if under a Pretence of Kindneſs and Indulgence to Sinners, it miniſtred to all Vice and Wickedneſs. *Celſus* confidently begins the Charge. * *There be ſome amongſt the Chriſtians* (ſays he) *that will nei-*

* Φησὶ δέ τινας μηδὲ βουλομένους διδόναι ἢ λαμβάνειν λόγον περὶ ὧν πιστεύουσι, χρῆσθαι τῷ μὴ ἐξετάζειν, ἀλλὰ πίστευσον. Καὶ, ἡ πίστις σε σώζει σε. Καὶ, κακὸν ἡ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ σοφία, ἀγαθὸν δ' ἡ μωρία.

Orig. adv. Celſ. l. 1. p. 8. vid. lib. 6. p. 282.

they

ther give nor receive a Reaſon of their Faith, who are wont to cry out, Don't examine, but believe; and, *Thy Faith will ſave thee*; *The Wiſdom of this World is evil, but Fooliſhneſs good and uſeful.* *Julian* carries on the Charge ſomewhat higher, as if the Chriſtian Religion were not only content with a naked and an empty Faith, but gave Encouragement to Sin, by aſſuring its moſt deſperate *Proſelytes* of an eaſy Pardon. In the Concluſion of his *Cæſars*, after he had aſſigned the *Roman* Emperors their particular *Tutelar* Deities, he delivers over *Conſtantine* the Great, the firſt Chriſtian Emperor, to the *Goddeſs of Pleaſure*, who having effeminately trick'd and dreſs'd him up, brought him to the Goddeſs *Aſotia*, or Intemperance, where he finds τὸν υἱὸν, *his Son*, *Conſtantius*, probably, (for the Paſſage is a little diſturbed and obſcure, for which Reaſon, probably, the Tranſlator paſſed it by, and took no Notice of it) making this univerſal Proclamation; *Whoever is an Adulterer, or a Murderer, whoever is an impure profligate Wretch, let him come boldly; for I declare, that being waſhed in this Water,* [Baptiſm] *he ſhall immediately be cleanſed: Nay, although he again commit thoſe Sins, let him but knock his Breaſt, and beat his Head, and I will make him clean.* Much to the ſame purpoſe *Zoſimus* (as good a Friend to Chriſtianity as either of the former) ſpitefully charges it upon *Conſtantine* the Great, that being haunted with the Conſcience of his prodigious Villanies, and having no Hopes given him by the *Gentile Prieſts* of the Expiation of his Crimes, embraced Chriſtianity, being told, that in the Chriſtian Religion

Ὅσις φθορεὺς, ὅσις μιαρόν Θ, ὅσις ἀναγὴς καὶ βδελυρὸς, ἴτω θαῤῥῶν, ἀπονιφανῶ γὰρ αὐτὸν τάχα τῷ ὕδατι λέσας, αὐτίκα καθαρόν. Κἂν πάλιν ἐνοχ Θ τοῖς αὐτοῖς γένηται, δώσω τὸ στῆθ Θ πλήξαντι, καὶ τ κεφαλὴ παλάξαντι, καθαρῷ γένεσθαι.

Julian. Cæſares. p. 53.

Πάσης ἁμαρτίας ἀναιρετικὸν εἶναι τὸ τῶν Χειστιανῶν διαβεβαιώσασθαι δόξαν· καὶ τοῦτο ἔχειν ἐπάγγελμα, τὸ τὸς ἀσεβεῖς μεταμβάνουσας αὐτῆς, πάσης ἁμαρτίας ἔξω παραχρῆμα καθίστασθαι.
Zosim. Hist. l. 2. p. 534.

Religion *there was a Promise of cleansing from all Sin, and that as soon as ever any closed with it, Pardon would be granted to the most profligate Offenders.* As if Christianity had been nothing else but a *Receptacle* and *Sanctuary* for *Rogues* and *Villains*, where the worst of Men might be wicked under Hopes of Pardon. But how false and groundless (especially as urged and intended by them) this impious Charge was, appears from the whole Design and Tenour of the Gospel, and that more than ordinary Vein of Piety and Strictness that was conspicuous in the Lives of its first Professors, whereof we have in this Treatise given abundant Evidence.

To this Representation of their Lives and Manners, I have added some Account concerning the Ancient Rites and Usages of the Church; wherein if any one shall meet with something that does not jump with his own Humour, he will I doubt not have more Discretion than to quarrel with me for setting down things as I found them. But in this Part I have said the less, partly because this was not the thing I primarily designed, partly because it has been done by others in just Discourses. In some few Instances I have remarked the *Corruption* and *Degeneracy of the Church of Rome*, from the *Purity* and *Simplicity* of the *Ancient Church*; and more I could easily have added, but that I studiously avoided Controversies, it being no Part of my Design to enquire what was the Judgment of the Fathers in Disputable Cases, especially the more Abstruse and Intricate Speculations of Theology, but what was their Practice, and by what Rules and Measures they did govern and conduct their Lives. The Truth is, their *Creed* in the first Ages was *short* and

and *ſimple*, their Faith lying then (as *Eraſmus* obſerves) not ſo much in *nice* and *numerous* Articles, as in a *good* and an *holy* Life. At the End of the Book I have added a Chronological *Index* of the *Authors*, according to the Times wherein they are ſuppoſed to have lived, with an Account of the *Editions* of their Works made uſe of in this Treatiſe. Which I did, not that I had a mind to tell the World, either what, or how many Books I had; a piece of Vanity, of which had I been guilty, it had been no hard matter to have furniſh'd out a much larger Catalogue: But I did it partly to gratify the Requeſt of the Bookſeller, partly becauſe I conceived it might not be altogether unuſeful to the Reader, for the *Index* to give ſome Light to the Quotations, by knowing when the Author lived, eſpecially when he ſpeaks of things done in or near his own Time, and which muſt otherwiſe have been done at every turn in the Body of the Book. And becauſe there are ſome Writings frequently made uſe of in this Book, the Authors whereof in this *Index* could be reduced to no certain Date, eſpecially thoſe that are call'd the *Apoſtolical Canons* and *Conſtitutions*; it may not be amiſs here briefly to take notice of them. And firſt, for the *Canons*; as I am far from their Opinion who aſcribe them to the *Apoſtles*, ſo I think their great Antagoniſt Mr. *Daillée* bends the Stick as much too far the other way; not allowing them a Being in the World till the Year 500, or a little before. The Truth doubtleſs lies between theſe two: 'Tis evident both from the Hiſtories of the Church, and many Paſſages in *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, and others, that there were in the moſt early Ages of Chriſtianity, frequent Synods and Councils for ſettling the Doctrine and Diſcipline of the Church, tho' the Determinations under that Notion be not extant at this Day. Part of theſe *Synodical*

Præfat. in Hilar. oper.

Decrees, ſo many of them as concern'd the Rites and Diſcipline of the Church, we may conceive ſome Perſon of Learning and Judgment gathered together probably about the Beginning of the Third Century, and put them (eſpecially the firſt *Fifty*, for I look not upon the whole *Eighty Five* as of equal Value and Authority) if not into the ſame, into ſome ſuch Sort or Method, wherein we now have them; ſtyling them *Eccleſiaſtical* or *Apoſtolical* Canons, not as if they had been compoſed by the *Apoſtles*, but either becauſe containing things conſonant to the Doctrines and Rules deliver'd by the *Apoſtles*, or becauſe made up of Uſages and Traditions ſuppoſed to be derived from them; or laſtly, becauſe made by Ancient and *Apoſtolick* Men. That many, if not all, of theſe Canons were ſome conſiderable time extant before the firſt *Nicene* Council, we have great Reaſon to believe, from two or three Paſſages, amongſt many others. S. *Baſil*, giving Rules about Diſcipline, appoints a Deacon guilty of Fornication to be depoſed and thruſt down into the Rank of *Laicks*, and that in that Capacity he might receive the Communion; *there being* (ſays he) ἀρχαῖον κανὼν, *an ancient Canon that they that are depoſed ſhould only fall under this kind of Puniſhment; the Ancients (as I ſuppoſe) following herein that Command, Thou ſhalt not puniſh twice for the ſame Fault.* This *Balſamon* joins with the twenty fifth *Canon* of the *Apoſtles*, which treats of the very ſame Affair; and indeed it cannot in probability be meant of any other, partly becauſe there was no ancient *Canon* (that we know of) in S. *Baſil*'s Time, about this Buſineſs, but that; partly becauſe the ſame Sentence is apply'd as the Reaſon both in the *Apoſtolical* and S. *Baſil*'s Canon, *Thou ſhalt not puniſh twice for the ſame Fault:* Which clearly ſhews whence *Baſil* had it, and what he underſtands by

Ep. Canon. ad Amphil. Can. 3.

by his *ancient Canon*. *Theodoret* records a Letter of *Alexander* Biſhop of *Alexandria*, to another of the ſame Name, Biſhop of *Conſtantinople*, (this Letter was written a little before the Council of *Nice*) where ſpeaking of ſome Biſhops who had received the *Arians*, whom he had excommunicated, into Communion, he tells them, *That herein they had done what the Apoſtolical Canons did not allow*; evidently referring to the twelfth and thirteenth *Canons* of the *Apoſtles*, which ſtate the Caſe about one Biſhop's receiving thoſe into Communion, who had been excommunicated by another. To this let me add, that *Conſtantine*, in a Letter to *Euſebius*, commends him for refuſing to leave his own Biſhoprick to go over to that of *Antioch*, to which he was choſen; eſpecially *becauſe herein he had exactly obſerv'd the Rule of Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline, and hath kept the Commands of God, and the Apoſtolical and Eccleſiaſtical Canon*; meaning doubtleſs the fourteenth *Apoſtolick* Canon, which treats about ſuch Removes. Nay, Learned Men, both formerly and of late, have obſerv'd divers Paſſages in the *Nicene* Canons themſelves, which plainly reſpect theſe Canons, as might be made appear (notwithſtanding what *Daillée* has excepted againſt it) were this a proper Place to diſcourſe of it. This for the Canons.

Hiſt. Eccl. l. 1. c. 4. p. 3.

De vit. Conſt. l. 3. c. 61. p. 518.

For the *Conſtitutions*, they are ſaid to have been compoſed by S. *Clemens*, at the Inſtance and by the Direction of the *Apoſtles*. And this wild and extravagant Opinion has not wanted its Patrons and Defenders, *Turrianus*, *Bovius*, &c. But herein deſerted by the more modeſt and moderate of their own Party; beſides that their *Apoſtolicalneſs* (in this Senſe) is by the Learned *Daillée* everlaſtingly ſhatter'd and broken. But then he ſets them at too wide a Diſtance, aſſigning them to the lat-

De Pſeud. epigr. Ap. l. 2. c. 17. p. 409.

latter end of the Fifth Century; when 'tis as clear as the Sun, that they were extant and in Credit with many before the Times of *Epiphanius*, (tho' ſomewhat alter'd now from what they were in his Time) compiled probably out of many leſſer Διδαχαὶ and Διαδάξεις· Books containing the *Doctrines* and *Rites* that had been delivered and practiſed by Ancient and *Apoſtolical* Perſons, or at leaſt vented under their Names: But whether, as ſome conjecture, compoſed by *Clemens Alexandrinus* (and thence by an eaſy Miſtake aſcribed to *Clemens Romanus*) I am not at leiſure to conſider. In this Claſs of Writers I may reckon *Dionyſius* the *Areopagite*, abſurdly enough aſſerted by many to be genuine, by *Daillée* thruſt down to the Beginning of the Sixth Century, but moſt probably thought to have been written about the Middle of the Fourth Age; as a Perſon amongſt us, deſervedly of great Name and Note, has ſhewn in his late *Vindication* of *Ignatius*'s Epiſtles. Theſe are the Principles of thoſe Authors, who could not be fix'd upon any certain Year; the reſt have in the *Index* their particular and reſpective times. To which I have added the Account of the *Editions*, for the more ready finding (if occaſion be) of any Paſſage quoted out of them.

One thing indeed there is, which I cannot but take notice of, it looks ſo like a piece of Vanity and Oſtentation: That the Margin is charged with ſo many *Quotations*. But whoever conſiders the Nature of my Deſign, will quickly ſee that it was abſolutely neceſſary, and that it concern'd me not to deliver any thing without good Authority; the Reaſon why I have, where I could, brought them in ſpeaking their own Words; tho', to avoid as much of the Charge as was poſſible, I omitted the citing Authors in their own Languages, and only ſet them down in *Engliſh*,

Engliſh, faithfully repreſenting the Author's Senſe, though not always tying myſelf to a ſtrict and preciſe Tranſlation. How pertinent my *Quotations* are, the Reader muſt judge; I hope he will find them exact, being immediately fetch'd from the Fountain-head; here being very few (if any) that have not been examin'd more than once. For the Method, into which the Book is caſt, I choſe that which to me ſeem'd moſt apt and proper; following S. *Paul*'s Diſtribution of Religion, into *Piety* towards God, *Sobriety* towards ourſelves, and *Righteouſneſs* towards others; and accordingly divided the Diſcourſe into three Parts, reſpecting thoſe three great Branches of Religion, tho' the firſt is much larger than either of the other, by reaſon of ſome *Preliminary* Chapters, containing a Vindication of the Chriſtians from thoſe Crimes that were charged upon them; that ſo the Rubbiſh being clear'd and thrown out of the way, we might have a fairer Proſpect of their Religion afterwards. The Book, I confeſs, is ſwell'd into a greater Bulk, than I either thought of or deſired; but by reaſon of ſomewhat a confuſed Copy, never deſign'd for the Preſs, no certain Meaſures could be taken of it.

And now, if after all this it ſhall be enquired, why theſe Papers are made publick? as I can give no very good Reaſon, ſo I will not trouble myſelf to invent a bad one. It may ſuffice to intimate, that this Diſcourſe (long ſince drawn up at leiſure hours) lay then by me, when a tedious and uncomfortable Diſtemper (whereby I have been taken off from all *Publick* Service, and the Proſecution of *ſeverer* Studies) gave me too much Opportunity to look over my Papers, and this eſpecially, which peradventure otherwiſe had never ſeen the Light. Indeed, I muſt confeſs I was

ſomewhat the eaſilier prevail'd with to let this Diſcourſe paſs abroad, that it might appear, that when I could not do what I ought, I was at leaſt willing to do what I could. If he that reads it, ſhall reap any Delight or Satisfaction by it, or be in any meaſure induced to imitate theſe Primitive Vertues, I ſhall think my Pains well beſtow'd: If not, I am not the firſt, and probably ſhall not be the laſt, that has written a Book to no purpoſe.

THE

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Primitive Christianity:

OR, THE

RELIGION

OF THE

Ancient Christians

IN THE

First AGES of the GOSPEL.

PART I.

CHAP. I.

Things charged upon the Primitive Christians, respecting their Religion.

Christian Religion likely to meet with Opposition at its first setting out. Chiefly undermined by Calumnies and Reproaches. Three Things by the Heathens charged upon the Christians; some Things respecting their Religion; some their outward Condition; others their Moral Carriage, and the Matters of

of their Worſhip. Their Religion charged with two Things, Impiety and Novelty. The Charge of Atheiſm conſider'd, and anſwer'd out of the Fathers. The Heathens excepted againſt as Incompetent Judges of the Affairs of Chriſtianity. In what Senſe Chriſtians confeſſed themſelves Atheiſts. The wretched and abſurd Deities that were amongſt the Heathens, and the impure Manner of their Worſhip. Atheiſm, properly ſuch, diſown'd and deny'd by Chriſtians. The Account they gave of their Religion, and the God whom they worſhipped.

NO ſooner did the SON of GOD appear in the World, to eſtabliſh the moſt excellent Religion that ever was communicated to Mankind, but he met with the moſt fierce and vigorous Oppoſition; perſecuted and devoted to Death as ſoon as he was born, followed all his Life with freſh Aſſaults of Malice and Cruelty, his Credit traduced and ſlandered, his Doctrine deſpiſed and ſlighted, and himſelf at laſt put to Death with the moſt exquiſite Arts of Torture and Diſgrace. And *if they thus ſerved the Maſter of the Houſe, how much more them of the Houſhold? The Diſciple not being above his Maſter, nor the Servant above his Lord.* Therefore when he gave Commiſſion to his *Apoſtles*, to publiſh this Religion to the World, he told them before-hand what hard and unkind Reception they muſt look to meet with; *That he ſent them forth as Sheep in the midſt of Wolves; that they ſhould be deliver'd up to the Councils, and ſcourged in the Synagogues, and be brought before Kings and Governors, and be hated of all*

Men

Men for his Name's ſake. Nay, ſo high ſhould the Quarrel ariſe upon the Account of Religion, that Men ſhould violate ſome of the neareſt Laws of Nature, *betray their Friends and Kinsfolk; the Brother delivering up the Brother to Death, and the Father the Child; the Children riſing up againſt their Parents, and cauſing them to be put to Death.* This he well foreſaw (and the Event truly anſwered it) would be the Fate of its firſt appearing in the World: And indeed, conſidering the preſent State and Circumſtances of the World at that time, it could not reaſonably be expected, that the *Chriſtian Religion* ſhould meet with a better Entertainment; for the Genius and Nature of its *Doctrine* was ſuch, as was almoſt impoſſible to eſcape the Frowns and Diſpleaſure of Men: A Doctrine it was, that call'd Men off from Luſts and Pleaſures, and offer'd Violence to their native Inclinations, that required the greateſt Strictneſs and Severity of Life, obliged Men *to deny themſelves, to take up their Croſs,* and to *follow* the Steps of a poor crucify'd *Saviour*; and that upon little other Encouragement at preſent, than the inviſible Rewards of another World. It introduced *new* Rites and Ceremonies, unknown to thoſe of former Ages, and ſuch as did undermine the received and eſtabliſhed Principles of that *Religion*, that for ſo many Generations had governed the World; it revealed and brought to Light ſuch Truths, as were not only contrary to the Principles of Men's Education, but many of them above the Reach of natural Comprehenſion, too deep for the Line of human Reaſon to fathom or find out.

Upon theſe, and ſuch like Accounts, Chriſtianity was ſure to encounter with mighty *Prejudices* and potent Oppoſition; and ſo it did: For no ſooner did it peep abroad in the World, but it was *every where ſpoken againſt*: Princes and Potentates, and the

Part I. the greateſt Powers and Policies of the World, did for ſome Ages confederate and combine together, to extirpate and baniſh it out of the World; and certainly, if Arms and Armies, if Strength and Subtilty, if Malice and Cruelty could have ſtifled it, it had been ſmother'd in its Infancy and firſt Delivery into the World. But notwithſtanding all theſe Oppoſitions, it ſtill lifted up its Head in triumph, and out-braved the fierceſt Storms of Perſecution; and as *Tertullian* told their Enemies, *By every exquiſite Act of Cruelty, they did but tempt others to come over to the Party; the oftener they were mowed down, the faſter they ſprang up again, the Blood of Chriſtians making the Church's Soil more fat and fertile.* Hereupon the great Enemy of Mankind betook himſelf to other Counſels, and ſought to undermine what he ſaw he could not carry by open Aſſault and Battery; he ſtudy'd to leaven the Minds of Men with falſe and unjuſt Prejudices againſt *Chriſtianity*, and to burden it with whole Loads of Reproaches and Defamations; knowing no ſpeedier way to hinder its *Reception*, than to blaſt its *Reputation*. For this purpoſe all the Arts of Spite and Malice were muſter'd up, and *Chriſtians* confidently charged with all thoſe Crimes that could render them and their Religion vile and infamous. Now the things that were charged upon the Chriſtians were either ſuch as reſpected their *Religion*, or ſuch as concerned their *outward State and Condition*, or ſuch as related to their *moral Carriage and Behaviour*, with ſome things relating to the Matter or Manner of their Worſhip. We ſhall conſider them in order, and how the *Chriſtians* of thoſe Times vindicated themſelves from theſe Imputations.

Apol. c. *ult.* p. 40.

The Chriſtian Religion, at its firſt coming abroad into the World, was mainly charged with theſe two things, **Impiety** and **Novelty**. For the firſt, it was commonly cry'd out againſt as a grand piece of

Chap. 1.

of *Atheiſm* and *Impiety*, as an Affront to their Religion, and an undermining the very Being and Exiſtence of their Gods. This is the Sum of the Charge, as we find it in the ancient Apologiſts; more particularly *Cæcilius* the *Heathen*, in *Minutius Felix*, accuſes the *Chriſtians* for a deſperate, undone, and unlawful Faction, who by way of Contempt, did *ſnuff* and *ſpit* at the Mention of their Gods, deride their Worſhip, ſcoff at their Prieſts, and deſpiſe their Temples as no better than *Charnel-Houſes*, and Heaps of Bones and Aſhes of the Dead. For theſe, and ſuch like Reaſons, the *Chriſtians* were every where accounted a Pack of *Atheiſts*, and their Religion **The Atheiſm**; and ſeldom it is that *Julian* the Emperor calls *Chriſtianity* by any other Name. Thus *Lucian* bringing in *Alexander* the Impoſtor, ſetting up for an Oracle-monger, ranks the *Chriſtians* with *Atheiſts* and *Epicureans*, as thoſe that were eſpecially to be baniſhed from his myſterious Rites. In anſwer to this Charge, the *Chriſtians* pleaded eſpecially theſe three things.

J. Martyr. Ap. 1. p. 47. Athenag. Legat. p. 4. Arnob. l. 1. p. 7. Min. Fel. p. 7.

Pſeudomant. p. 888. Tom. 2.

Firſt, That the *Gentiles* were for the moſt part *incompetent* Judges of ſuch Caſes as theſe, as being almoſt wholly ignorant of the true State of the *Chriſtian* Doctrine, and therefore unfit to pronounce Sentence againſt it. Thus when *Creſcens* the Philoſopher had traduced the *Chriſtians* as Atheiſtical and Irreligious, *Juſtin Martyr* anſwers, That he talk'd about things which he did not underſtand, feigning things of his own head, only to comply with the humour of his ſeduced Diſciples and Followers; that in reproaching the Doctrine of *Chriſt*, when he did not underſtand it, he diſcovered a moſt wicked and malignant Temper, and ſhewed himſelf far worſe than the moſt Simple and Unlearned, who are not wont raſhly to bear witneſs and determine in things not ſufficiently known to them:

Juſt. Mart. loc. laud.

Part I. them: Or if he did understand its *Greatness* and *Excellency*, then he shewed himself much more base and disingenuous, in charging upon it what he knew to be false, and concealing his inward Sentiments and Convictions, for fear lest he should be suspected to be a *Christian*. But *Justin* well knew, that he was miserably unskilful in matters of *Christianity*, having formerly had Conferences and Disputations with him about these things; and therefore offer'd the *Senate* of *Rome* (to whom he then presented his *Apology*) if they had not heard the Sum of it, to hold another Conference with him, even before the *Senate* itself; which he thought would be a Work worthy of so wise and grave a Council: Or if they had heard it, then he did not doubt but they clearly apprehended how little he understood these things; or, that if he did understand them, he knowingly dissembled it to his Auditors, not daring to own the Truth, as *Socrates* did in the face of Danger; an evident Argument, that he was ὐ φιλόσοφος, ἀλλὰ φιλόδοξος, *not a Philosopher*, but a Slave to popular Applause and Glory.

J. Mart. Ap. 2. (*seu verius* 1.) *p.* 56, & *p.* 55.

Secondly, They did in some sort confess the Charge, That according to the vulgar Notion which the *Heathens* had of their *Deities*, they were *Atheists*, i. e. *Strangers and Enemies to them*; That the Gods of the Gentiles were at best but *Dæmons*, impure and unclean Spirits, who had long imposed upon Mankind, and by their Villanies, Sophistries, and Arts of Terror, had so affrighted the common People, who knew not really what they were, and who judge of things more by Appearance than by Reason, that they called them Gods, and gave to every one of them that Name, which the *Dæmon* was willing to take to himself: And that they really were nothing but Devils, fallen and apostate Spirits, the *Christians* evidently manifested at every turn, forcing them

to

to the confessing it, while by Prayer, and invocating the Name of the true God, they drove them out of possess'd Persons; and therefore they trembled to encounter with a *Christian*, as *Octavius* triumphingly tells *Cæcilius*: That they entertained the most absurd and fabulous Notions of their Gods, and usually ascribed such things to them as would be accounted an horrible *Shame* and *Dishonour* to any wise and good Man; the Worship and mysterious Rites of many of them being so brutish and filthy, that the honester and severer *Romans* were ashamed on't, and therefore over-turned their Altars, and banished them out of the Roll of their Deities, tho' their degenerate Posterity took them in again, as *Tertullian* observes; their Gods themselves so impure and beastly, their Worship so obscene and detestable, that *Julius Firmicus* advises them to turn their *Temples* into *Theatres*, where the Secrets of their Religion may be delivered in *Scenes*, and to make their *Players Priests*, and that the common Rout may sing the *Amours*, the Sports and Pastimes, the Wantonnesses and Impieties of their Gods; no Places being so fit for such a Religion as they. Besides the attributing to them Human Bodies, with many Blemishes and Imperfections, and Subjection to the Miseries of Human Life, and to the Laws of Mortality; they could not deny them to have been guilty of the most horrid and prodigious Villanies and Enormities, Revenge and Murder, Incest and Luxury, Drukenness and Intemperance, Theft and unnatural Rebellion against their Parents, and such like; of which their own Writings were full almost in every Page; which served only to corrupt and debauch the Minds and Manners of Youth; as *Octavius* tells his Adversary, where he pursues this Argument at large, with great Eloquence and Reason. Nay, those among them that

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Pag. 23.

Apol. c. 7. *p.* 7. *De Err. Prof. Relig. p.* 9.

Min. Fel. p. 19. *Vid. Arnob. adv. Gent. l.* 1. *p.* 7.

Part I. that were moſt *inquiſitive* and *ſerious*, and that entertained more abſtract and refined Apprehenſions of things than the common People, yet could not agree in any fit and rational Notion of a Deity; ſome ridiculouſly affirming one thing, and ſome another, till they were divided into a hundred different Opinions, and all of them farther diſtant from the *Truth*, than they were from one another; the Vulgar, in the mean while, making Gods of the moſt brutiſh Objects, ſuch as Dogs, Cats, Wolves, Goats, Hawks, Dragons, Beetles, Crocodiles, &c. This *Origen* againſt *Celſus* particularly charges upon the *Ægyptians*; *When you approach* (ſays he) *their ſacred Places, they have glorious Groves and Chappels, Temples with goodly Gates, and ſtately Portico's, and many myſterious and religious Ceremonies; but when once you are entred, and got within their Temples, you ſhall ſee nothing but a Cat or an Ape, or a Crocodile, or a Goat, or a Dog, worſhipped with the moſt ſolemn Veneration.* Nay, they deified *ſenſleſs* and *inanimate things*, that had no Life or Power to help themſelves, much leſs their *Worſhipers*; Herbs, Roots, and Plants; nay *unmanly and degenerate Paſſions*, Fear, Paleneſs, &c. fell down before Stumps and Statues, which owed all their Divinity to the Coſt and Folly of their Votaries, deſpiſed and trampled on by the ſorrieſt Creatures, Mice, Swallows, &c. who are wont to build Neſts in the very *Mouth* of their Gods, and Spiders to *perriwig* their Heads with *Cobwebs*; being forced firſt to *make them*, and then *make* them *clean*, and to *defend* and *protect* them, that they might *fear* and *worſhip* them, as he in *Minutius* wittily derides them; *in whoſe Worſhip there are* (ſays he) *many things that juſtly deſerve to be laugh'd at, and others that call for Pity and Compaſſion.* And what wonder now, if the *Chriſtians* were not in the leaſt aſhamed to be called *Atheiſts*, with reſpect

Vid. Min. Fel. p. 15, 16.

Adv. Celſ. l. 3. p. 121.

Vid. Athanaſ. Orat. cont. Gent.

Min. Fel. p. 20.

reſpect to ſuch Deities, and ſuch a Religion, as this was? Chap. 1.

Thirdly, in the ſtrict and proper Notion of *Atheiſm* they no leſs truly than confidently denied the Charge, and appealed to their ſevereſt Adverſaries whether thoſe who owned ſuch Principles as they did, could reaſonably be ſtyled *Atheiſts*. None ever pleaded better and more irrefragable Arguments for the Exiſtence of a Supreme Infinite Being, who made and governs all things by Infinite Wiſdom and Almighty Power; none ever more ready to produce a moſt clear and candid *confeſſion* of their Faith, as to this grand Article of Religion, than they. Although we profeſs ourſelves *Atheiſts*, with reſpect to thoſe whom you eſteem and repute to be Gods (*ſo their Apologiſt tells the Senate*) yet not in reſpect of the true God; the Parent and Fountain of Wiſdom and Righteouſneſs, and all other Excellencies and Perfections, who is infinitely free from the leaſt Contagion or Spot of Evil: *Him*, and his *only begotten Son* (who inſtructed us and the whole Society of good Angels in theſe Divine Myſteries) and the *Spirit of Prophecy*, we worſhip and adore, honouring them in Truth, and with the higheſt Reaſon, and ready to communicate theſe things to any one that's willing to learn them, as we ourſelves have received them. Can we then be *Atheiſts*, who worſhip the great *Creator* of this World, not with Blood, Incenſe, and Offerings, (which we are ſufficiently taught he ſtands in no need of) but exalt him according to our Power, with Prayers and Praiſes, in all the Addreſſes we make to him; believing this to be the only Honour that is worthy of him, not to conſume the Creatures which he has given us for our uſe and the comfort of thoſe that want, in the fire by Sacrifice; but to approve ourſelves thankful to him, and to ſing and celebrate Rational Hymns and Sacrifices, pouring out our

J. Martyr. Ap. 1. *p.* 56.

Ib. p. 60.

Part I. Prayers to him as a grateful Return for those many good things which we have received, and do yet expect from him, according to the Faith and Trust that we have in him. To the same purpose *Athenagoras*, in his Return to his Charge: *Diagoras* indeed (says he) was guilty of the deepest Atheism and Impiety; but *we*, who separate God from all material Being, and affirm him to be Eternal and Unbegotten, but all Matter to be made and corruptible, how unjustly are we branded with Impiety? It's true, did we side with *Diagoras* in denying a Divinity, when there are so many and such powerful Arguments from the Creation and Government of the World to convince us of the Existence of God and Religion, then both the Guilt and Punishment of *Atheism* might deservedly be put upon us. But when our Religion acknowledges one God, the Maker of the Universe, who being uncreate himself, created all things by his Word, we are manifestly wrong'd both in Word and Deed; both in being charged with it, and in being punished for it. We are accused (says *Arnobius*) for introducing Prophane Rites, and an Impious Religion; but tell me, O ye Men of Reason, how dare you make so rash a Charge? To adore the mighty God, the Sovereign of the whole Creation, the Governor of the highest Powers, to pray to him with the most obsequious Reverence; under an Afflicted State to lay hold of him with all our Powers, to love him, and to look up to him; is this a dismal and detestable Religion, a Religion full of Sacrilege and Impiety, destroying and defiling all ancient Rites? Is this that bold and prodigious Crime, for which your Gods are so angry with us, and for which you yourselves do so rage against us, confiscating our Estates, banishing our Persons, burning, tearing, and racking us to Death with such ex-

Athen. leg. pro Christian. p. 5.

L. 1. p. 7.

exquisite Tortures? *We Christians* are nothing else but the Worshippers of the supreme King and Governor of the World, according as we are taught by *Christ our Master*; search, and you'll find nothing else in our Religion: This is the Sum of the whole affair, this is the End and Design of our Divine Offices; before him it is that we are wont to prostrate and bow ourselves, him we worship with common and conjoined Devotions, from him we beg those things which are just and honest, and such as are not unworthy of him to hear and grant. So little Reason had the Enemies of *Christianity* to brand it with the Note of *Atheism* and *Irreligion*. Chap. 2.

CHAP. II.

Of the Novelty that was charged upon Christianity.

Christianity excepted and cryed out against as a late Novel Doctrine. This a common Charge; continued when Christianity had been some hundred of Years in the World. Christianity greatly prejudiced by this Charge. Men loth to forsake the Religion of their Ancestors. What the Christians answered to it. Christian Religion the same in Substance and Effect with that of the ancient Jews; *in that respect, by far the Oldest Religion in the World; prov'd and urg'd by* Tertullian, Cl. Alexandrinus, Eusebius, *&c. Its Lateness and Novelty no real Prejudice to Rational and Unbyass'd Men. The Folly and Vanity of adhering to absurd and unreasonable Cu-*

Part. I.

and Principles, because Ancient; and of refusing to change Opinions for the better. An Objection; If Christ and Christianity were so great Blessings to Mankind, why was it so long before God revealed them? Answered out of Arnobius.

THis *Artifice* proving weak and ineffectual, the next Charge was its Lateness and Novelty, that is, was an upstart Sect, and but of Yesterday's standing, not known in the World many Years before; whereas the Religion of the *Gentiles* had uncontroulably and almost universally obtained from Ages and Generations: A Doctrine newly sprung up, *and come, as 'twere, from a far Country,* *Lib. 3. p. 119. B.* παρφάτε ὁ διδιοῦ τὸν κατ' ἡμᾶς λόγε, as 'tis in *Theophilus Antiochenus*; a *Divorce*, or rending themselves from the Institutions of their Ancestors, as *Ad Natio. l. 1. c. 10. p. 46.* *Tertullian* has it. This Charge began betimes: When S. *Paul* preached at *Athens*, we find this the first thing charged upon him, *Acts 17. 18.* *That he was a Setter forth of strange Gods, because he preached to them Jesus and the Resurrection*; and it was followed with a loud Cry in succeeding times. You are wont to *L. 2. p. 40.* object to us (says *Arnobius*) that our Religion is *novel*, started up not many Days ago, and that you ought not to desert your ancient way, and the Religion of your Country to espouse *barbarous* and foreign Rites. And *Eusebius* tells us, the *Heathens* were wont to reason thus: What *strange* Profession of Religion is this? What *new* way of Life, wherein we can neither discern the Rites amongst us us'd in *Greece*, nor amongst any Sect of the *Barbarians*? Who can deny them to be *impious*, who have forsaken the Customs of their Fathers, observed before in all Cities and Countries, revolting from a way of Worship which had been universal-

Præpar. Evang. l. 1. §. 2. p. 5.

ly

ly received from all Ages, both by *Greeks* and *Barbarians*, entertained both in Cities and Villages, countenanced and approved by the common Vote and Conſent of all *Kings*, *Law-makers*, *Philoſophers*, and the greateſt Perſons whatſoever. Nay, we may obſerve, that after *Chriſtianity* had been ſettled for ſome hundreds of Years in the World, and was become the prevailing Religion, and had in a manner baniſhed all others out of Doors, and driven them into Corners, yet this Charge ſtill continued. Thus *Julian* the Emperor, writing to the People of *Alexandria* concerning the *Galilæans* (ſo he was wont in ſcorn to call the Chriſtians) that he wondered that any of them durſt dwell amongſt them, or that they would ſuffer theſe Deſpiſers of the Religion of their Country to be in any Place amongſt them; calls *Chriſtianity*, the *new Doctrine* that had been preached to the World; the very ſame Title which *Lucian* had alſo long ſince beſtowed upon it; where ſpeaking of our *Saviour*, he calls him the Great Man that was crucified in *Paleſtine*, who introduced that *new* Religion into the World. So *Symmachus* ſome Years after *Julian* (a Man no leſs eminent for his *Parts* and *Eloquence* than for his *Power* and *Authority*, being *Chief Prieſt* and *Prefect* of *Rome*) confidently owns to the *Emperors* themſelves, (though they were *Chriſtians*) that he did endeavour to defend the Inſtitutions of their Anceſtors, the ſettled Rites and Laws of the Country, (he means thoſe of Religion) that he deſign'd to ſettle that State of Religion, which for ſo many Ages had been profitable to the Commonwealth; and therefore begs of them, that what they had received when they were Children, now they were old they might leave to their Poſterity; that they were to be true to the Truſt that had from ſo many Ages been devolved upon them, and were to follow their Parents, as they had happily done their

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Ep. 51. *oper. Jul. part.* 2. *p.* 208.

De mort. Peregrin. tom. 2. *p.* 762.

Symmach. ep. lib. 10. *ep.* 54. *ad Valent. Theod. Arcad. A. A. A. p.* 537.

Pag. 538.

Pag. 539.

Part. I. Anceſtors, that had gone before them. So he, pleading the Cauſe of *Paganiſm* from its *Antiquity* and *Preſcription*, obliquely reflecting upon the *Novelliſm* of *Chriſtianity*, for more he durſt not ſpeak; the Emperors (to whom he made his Addreſs) being themſelves Chriſtians. This indeed muſt needs be a mighty *Prejudice* againſt the *Chriſtian Religion* at its firſt coming into the World; for all Men, as they have a natural *Reverence* for Religion, ſo they have a great *Veneration* for Antiquity, the Cuſtoms and Traditions of their Fathers, which they entertain as a moſt ineſtimable *Depoſitum*, and for which they look upon themſelves as obliged to contend, as for that which is moſt Solemn and Sacred. What more excellent and venerable (ſays the Heathen in *Minutius Felix*) than to entertain the Diſcipline of our Fore-Fathers, to ſolemnize that Religion which has been delivered to us; to worſhip thoſe Gods, the Knowledge of whom has been infuſed into us by our Parents; not boldly to determine concerning the Deities, but to believe thoſe who have been before us. To the ſame Purpoſe, *Lactantius* ſpeaking of the Heathens, they go on (ſays he) moſt pertinaciouſly to maintain and defend the Religion derived down to them from their Anceſtors, not ſo much conſidering what they are, as concluding them to be right and good, becauſe the Ancients conveyed them to them; nay, ſo great is the Power and Authority of Antiquity, that it is accounted a kind of *Impiety* to queſtion it, or enquire into it. Upon theſe Accounts the *Gentiles* bore ſo hard upon *Chriſtianity*, beholding it as a *Muſhroom-Sect*, ſprung up of a ſudden, and as an incroaching Inmate, undermining the Eſtabliſhed Religion of the World.

Min. Fel. *p.* 5.

Lact. l. 2. *c.* 6. *p.* 17. 1.

Now we find two Pleas eſpecially, which the *Chriſtians* made to this Indictment.

First,

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First, That the Charge was not wholly and universally true: For besides that many Principles of *Christianity* were the same with that of the *Law of Nature*; the *Christian Religion* was for Substance the same with that of the ancient *Jews*, whose Religion claimed the Precedency of all others in the World. That the Religion was in Substance and Effect the same, is expressly asserted and proved by *Eusebius*. The ancient *Patriarchs* were the *Christians* of the old World, who had the same Faith, Religion and Worship common with us, nay, the same *Name* too, as he endeavours to prove from that, *Touch not mine Anointed*, μὴ Χριστῶν μου, *my Christs*, or *Christians*: And how far superiour in Age they were to any thing that's recorded of the most *Ancient Gentiles*, to their oldest Writers, *Orpheus*, *Homer*, *Hesiod*, nay to their very Gods themselves, is sufficiently made good by many of the Ancient Fathers; there being, at the easiest Computation, between *Moses* and *Homer*, above 600 Years: Nay, *Cadmus* (the first Inventor of Letters among the *Grecians*) was some Ages *Junior* to *Moses*. Therefore *Origen* tells *Celsus*, that *Moses* and the Prophets were not only more Ancient than *Plato*, but than *Homer* himself; yea, than the very Invention of Letters among the *Grecians*, who yet were as proud of their *Antiquity*, as any other Nation in the World. Nay, whatever useful and excellent Notions the great *Masters* of Religion amongst the *Heathens* had amongst them, 'tis plain they borrowed, or more truly, *stole* them, from the Writings of the Ancient *Jews*, as is abundantly demonstrated by *Eusebius* at large; as before him it had been done by *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, and by *Tertullian* before them both; who shews, that all their *Poets*, and *Philosophers* had drunk deep of the *Fountain* of the Prophets, and had forced their best Doctrines and Opinions from thence, tho' subtilly altering

Demonstr. Evang. l. 1. c. 5. p. 2, &c.

Vid. Athen. leg. pro Christianis, p. 16.

Clem. Alex. strom. lib. 1.

Adv. Cels. l. 6. p. 279.

Præpar. Evang. l. 10. tot.

Cl. Alex. strom. l. 1. p. 320.

Tert. Ap. c. 47. Vide Theod. de curand. Gr. Affect. Serm. 2. de princip.

Part I. and disguising them, to make them look more like their own. So that upon this Consideration, the Accusation was unjust and false, and *Christianity* appears the Oldest Religion in the World.

Secondly, Admit the *Christian* Religion in a more limited and restrained Sense, to be of a far *later* Standing than the Religion of the *Gentiles*; yet they pleaded that it was infinitely reasonable, that they should change for the better, whenever it offered itself to them; that *Novel Truth* was better than *Ancient Error*, and that they ought not to be eternally bound up in old inveterate Customs and Principles, when those which were abundantly more reasonable and satisfactory were presented to them. You tell us (says *Clemens Alex.*) that you may not subvert the Customs receiv'd from your Ancestors: But if so, why then are we not content without any other *Food* than our *Mother's Milk* to which we were accustomed when we first came into the World? Why do we *increase* or *impair* our Estates, and not rather keep them at the same Pitch just as we received them from our Fathers? Why have we left off those Toys and Sports, to which we were wonted while Infants and Children, but only because Years and Discretion (altho' we had no other Tutor) would make us quit those childish and trifling Vanities? That old Age (says S. *Ambrose*) has true cause to blush, that is ashamed to *reform*. 'Tis not *Multitude of Years*, but the *Goodness of Manners* that makes gray Hairs worthy of Praise and Honour. No Age is too late to learn, nor is it Shame to grow better. What wilt thou do (says *Lactantius* to the Heathen) wilt thou follow *Reason* or thy *Ancestors?* If Reason, then thou must needs relinquish the Authority and Institutions of thy Forefathers, because that way only can be right, that is warranted and prescribed by Reason; But if Piety

Admonit. ad Gent. p. 57.

Ambr. ep. 2. contr. Symmach. inter Ep. Symmach. p. 562.

Lact. loco supra laudato.

Piety towards thine Anceſtors ſway with thee to follow them, thou muſt confeſs both that they were Fools in devoting themſelves to a Religion contrary to Reaſon, and that thou thyſelf art unwiſe and ſimple in worſhipping what thou art convinced to be falſe: Beſides, that they had little Reaſon to boaſt of thoſe goodly Anceſtors, to whom they adhered ſo cloſe, and upon whoſe Authority they did ſo much depend; as he goes on to demonſtrate in the remaining Part of that Chapter. That you object to us the Novelty of our Religion (ſo *Arnobius*) may we not charge ſome ſuch Fault upon the firſt and moſt ancient Ages of the World, who at firſt lived in a very poor and mean State; but by little and little changed it into a more liberal and ſplendid Courſe of Life? Was it any Crime that they changed their *Beaſts Skins* into more *comely* and *convenient Garments*, or that they were no longer fond of their *thatched Cottages*, or choſe to dwell like wild Beaſts in Rocks and Caverns, when they had learnt to build better *Habitations*? 'Tis natural to all Mankind to prefer better before what is worſe, profitable before what is uſeleſs, and to ſeek after what we are aſſured is more grateful and excellent. Therefore when you charge us with Apoſtaſy from the Religion of the Ancients, you ſhould rather conſider the *Cauſe* than the *Action*, and not ſo much upbraid us with what we have left, as examine what it is we have *entertained*. For if merely to change our Opinion, and to paſs from ancient Inſtitutions to what's more late and new, be a Fault and Crime, then none ſo guilty of the Charge as yourſelves, who have ſo oft changed your Manners and Courſe of Life, and by embracing new Rites and Cuſtoms, have condemned thoſe that went before; which he there makes good by particular Inſtances. And the ſame Anſwer S. *Ambroſe* gives to

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Adv. Gent. l. 2. p. 40, 41.

Part I. to *Symmachus*: If nothing but ancient Rites will please you, how comes it to pass that there has been a Succession of new and foreign Rites even in *Rome* itself? Of which he gives him many particular Examples. In short, *Ambrose* wittily argues thus: *Our way of Religion* (you say) *is new, and yours ancient; and what does this either hurt our Cause, or help yours? If ours be new, 'twill in time become old. Is yours old? There was a Time when it was new. The Goodness and Authority of Religion is not to be valued by length of Time, but by the Excellency of its Worship; nor does it become us to consider so much when it began, as what it is we worship.*

Ib. p. 42.

Ib. p. 43. *Vid. Greg. Nyss. Orat. Catechet. c.* 29. *Tom.* 2. *p.* 521.

It may not be impertinent in this place to take notice of what the Heathens objected as a Branch of this Charge; that if God's sending *Christ* into the World was so great a Blessing, why did this *Saviour* of Mankind come no *sooner* to reveal this Religion, to lead Men into the Truth, to tell the World who this true God was, and to reduce us to the Adoration of him? If so, why did God suffer him to stay so long, and to be born (as 'twere) but a few hours before, in comparison of the preceding Ages of the World? To this *Arnobius* answers, with a great deal of *Modesty* and *Reason*, that he could not tell; that 'twere easy to retort the same captious Question upon them: If 'twere so much to the Benefit of the World, that *Hercules*, *Æsculapius*, *Mercury*, &c. should be Gods, why were they born and deify'd no *sooner*, that not only Posterity but Antiquity might have reap'd Advantage by them? If there was Reason in one Case, then there was also in the other; but to assign proper and particular Reasons, was not possible; it not being within the Power of such a short-sighted Creature as Man is, to fathom the Depth of the Divine Counsels, or to discover by what Ways or Methods he disposes his Affairs; these things being known only

ly to him who is the grand Parent, the Sovereign Lord and Governor of all Things: That altho' we are not able to aſſign the Cauſe why a Thing comes to paſs in this or that particular Manner, yet this concludes never a whit the more that the Thing is not ſo, or that it is leſs credible, when it has otherwiſe the moſt clear and unqueſtionable Evidence and Demonſtration. More particularly he anſwers, that our *Saviour* cannot be ſaid to have been lately ſent in reſpect of God, becauſe in reſpect of Eternity there is nothing late; where there is neither *beginning* nor *end*, there can be nothing *too ſoon*, nothing *too late*. Time indeed is tranſacted by Parts and Terms, but theſe have no place in a perpetual and uninterrupted *Series* of eternal Ages. What if that State of Things, to which he came to bring Relief, required that Seaſon of time to come in? What if the Condition of ancient and modern Times were in this Caſe not alike, or called for ſomewhat different Methods of Cure? It may be, the great God then choſe to ſend *Chriſt*, when the State of Mankind was more *broken* and *ſhatter'd*, and human Nature become more weak and unable to help itſelf. This we are ſure of, that if what ſo lately came to paſs had been neceſſary to have been done ſome thouſands of Years ago, the Supreme Creator would have done it; or had it been neceſſary to have been done thouſands of Years hence, nothing could have forced God to have anticipated the ſettled Periods of Time one Moment: For all his Actions are managed by fix'd and eternal Reaſons, and what he has once determined, cannot be fruſtrated by any Change or Alteration. And thus we ſee how eaſily, and yet how ſatisfactorily the *Primitive Chriſtians* wiped off that double Imputation of *Impiety* and *Novelty*, which the *Gentiles* had ſo undeſervedly caſt upon their Religion. Chap. 2.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Things charged upon the Christians respecting their outward Condition.

The Christians looked upon, and despised by the Heathens, as a Company of rude and illiterate Persons, Mechanicks, silly Women and Children. This Charge consider'd and largely answer'd by Origen. *Christianity provides for the truest and best Knowledge; it excludes none, learned or unlearned. Christians not shy of communicating the Knowledge of their Mysteries to Men sober and inquisitive. The Efficacy of Christianity in prevailing upon Men of the acutest Parts and greatest Learning. The Christians accused for being poor and mean. This Charge (universally) false. Christianity entertained by Persons of all Sorts, of the highest as well as the lowest Rank. Several Instances of such:* Fl. Clemens *and* Fl. Domitilla (Domitian's *near Kindred*) *Christians; another* Domitilla, Domitian's *Niece*, Acil. Glabrio *the Consul*, Apollonius *the Senator, and others.* Philip *the Emperor proved to be no Christian; the Rise of the Story whence. Tho' Christianity had had no such Persons under its Profession, this had been no just or reasonable Prejudice. External Pomp and Grandeur not necessary to Religion. The Advantages Christians reaped from their Meanness and Contempt of the World. Of their being charged*

as

as a People useless and unserviceable to the Publick. This disown'd. The Opinion that it was not lawful for Christians to bear Arms or Offices, particular only to some Persons and in some Cases, and why. How much the World was beholden to Christians for reclaiming Men from Vice and Wickedness. The Gospel greatly instrumental that way; its general Influence upon those whom it did not convert: The Writings of Philosophers generally better after Christianity appear'd, and why. The excellent Prayer of Simplicius. *Christians very useful by frequent working beneficial Miracles, curing Diseases, raising the Dead, dispossessing Devils,* &c. *This miraculous Power continued for several Ages in the Church. Christians farther traduced as pernicious to the World, as the Cause of all publick Evils and Calamities. This objected at every Turn. The Occasion of S.* Augustine's *and* Orosius's *writing a Vindication of it. This Charge justly retorted upon the Heathens, and they sent to seek the Cause of publick Calamities nearer home. Some few hinted by* Tertullian. *Christians unjustly charged with it, because the World was pester'd with such Evils before Christianity appear'd in it. The publick State better and more prosperous since Christianity than before. Its Prosperity ebbed or increased according to the Entertainment Christianity found in the World.*

Chap. 3.

THE

Part I. THE ſecond ſort of *Arts* which the Enemies of *Chriſtianity* made uſe of, to render *Chriſtians* vile and deſpicable, related to the Circumſtances of their **External State and Condition** in the World; where two Things were laid to their Charge, that they generally were *a very mean and inconſiderable ſort of Men*, and that they were *an uſeleſs and unſerviceable People*, nay *pernicious* and *miſchievous* to the World. They were looked upon as the *loweſt* and *meaneſt* Rank of Men, Perſons neither conſiderable for their *Parts* and *Learning*, nor for their *Eſtates* and *Quality*. Inconſiderable they were accounted in reſpect of *Parts* and *Learning*: *You ſcorn and ſpit us out as rude and ſimple, and think that the Treaſury of all Divine and Excellent Knowledge is open only to yourſelves*, as *Arnobius* tells them. Thus *Celſus* objected, that amongſt the *Chriſtians* no wiſe and learned Men were admitted to the *Myſteries* of their Religion. Let no Man come that is learned, wiſe and prudent; for theſe Things (ſays he) they account evil and unlawful; but if any be unlearned, an Infant or an Idiot, let him come and welcome; openly declaring, that none but Fools, and ſuch as are devoid of Senſe and Reaſon, Slaves, ſilly Women and little Children are fit Diſciples for the God they worſhip. We may obſerve (ſays he) theſe trifling and *Mountebank Impoſtors*, bragging great things to the Vulgar, not in the Preſence and Company of wiſe Men (for that they dare not) but where-ever they eſpy a Flock of Boys, Slaves, and weak ſimple People, there they preſently croud in, and boaſt themſelves. You ſhall ſee (as he goes on in this Charge) Weavers, Taylors, Fullers, and the moſt ruſtick and illiterate Fellows, at home, when before their Elders and Betters, as mute as Fiſhes; but when they can get a few Children and ſilly Women by themſelves, then

Adv. Gent. l. 3. p. 49. Orig. cont.

Celſ. l. 3. p. 137.

Ib. p. 141.

Pag. 144.

then who so wise and learned, who so full of Talk, and so able to teach and instruct as they? Much to this purpose, *Cæcilius* discourses in *Minutius Felix*, that the *Christians* were Men of a *desperate* and *unlawful Faction*, who gathering a Company out of the very Dregs and Refuse of the People, of silly, easy, credulous Women, who by reason of the Weakness of their Sex, are easily imposed and wrought upon, combine them into a wicked Confederation; a People *mute* in *publick*, but in *Corners Talkative and full of Prattle*. Now to this Part of the Accusation *Origen* answers, That 'tis for the main *false*, and proceeds from the Spirit of Malice and Reproach. The *Sum* of his Answer, as he delivers it to the several Parts of the Charge, take thus: That the *Christian Doctrine* invites, and calls Men to Wisdom, as appears both from the Writings of the *Jews* of old, and the Scriptures of the *New Testament*, wherein we find many singularly eminent for Wisdom and Learning, *Moses*, *Solomon*, *Daniel*, and such like of old, and the blessed *Jesus* made Choice of such Disciples, as whom he judged fittest to communicate the Secrets of his Religion to, and privately open'd and explain'd to them, what he only deliver'd in Parables and Similitudes unto others; that he promised to *send forth Prophets, wise Men and Scribes*, for the divulging and propagating of his Doctrine; that S. *Paul* reckons *Wisdom* and *Knowledge* in the first Rank of the *Gifts of God*; and that if he any where seem to reflect severely upon Wisdom or human Learning, (which probably may be the first rise of this Charge) he only censures the *Abuse*, never intending to blame the thing itself; that when he prescribes the Property of a *true Bishop*, or Governor of the Church, he requires this as one necessary Qualification, *That he be apt to teach, and able by sound Doctrine both to exhort and to convince the Gainsayers.*

Chap. 3.

Min. Fel. p. 7.

Pag. 137. & seq.

Mat. 23. 34.

1 Cor. 12. 8.

Tit. 1. 9.

That

Part I. That we are so far from prohibiting any, that come who will, Wise, Learned and Prudent, provided the Rude, Simple and Unlearned be not excluded; for to them also the Gospel does promise and provide a Remedy, making them meet for God. That no Man but must confess that 'tis an excellent thing to study the best Arts and Discipline, and that Learning, the Study of Arts and Prudence, are so far from being an Hindrance to the Knowledge of God, that they mightily help it and advance it. That it's a great Calumny to compare us to *wandring Impostors*, who by our reading and expounding the Divine Oracles, do only exhort the People to *Piety* towards the great God, and to the rest of those *Vertues* which are its individual Companions; endeavouring to rescue Men from a Contempt of the Deity, and all brutish and irregular Passions; a thing which the very best Philosophers of them all could wish for. That *Christians* are so far from admitting any hand over head, that they first pre-examine the Minds of those that desire to become their Auditors; and having privately had Trial of them, before they receive them into the Congregation, when they perceive them fully resolved to lead a pious and religious Life, then they admit them in their distinct Orders; some that are newly admitted, but not *yet baptized*; others that have given some Evidence and Demonstration of their purpose to live as becomes *Christians*; amongst whom there are *Governors* appointed to inspect and enquire into the Life and Manners of those who have been admitted, that they may expel and turn off those *Candidates* of Religion who answer not their Profession, and heartily entertain those that do, and by daily Converse build them up and make them better. That it's false to say that we apply ourselves only to *Women* and *Children*, and that in

Corners,

Corners, when we endeavour what we can by all means to fill our Societies with Wise and Prudent Persons, and to such we open the more *sublime* and *recondite Principles* of Religion, otherwise accommodating our Discourses to the Capacities of meaner Persons, who stand more in need of *Milk* than *strong Meat*: That we desire that all Men may be trained up in the Word of God, and that Servants and Children may have such Instructions given them, as are suitable and convenient to them; the Ministers of our Religion professing themselves to be Debtors both to the *Greeks* and *Barbarians*, both to the *Wise* and to the *Unwise*, that as much as may be they may outgrow their Ignorance, and attain to the best kind of Wisdom. And whereas we are accused to seduce and circumvent *silly Women* and *little Children*, and to draw them away from more weighty and serious Counsels; let him produce any such, and enquire of them whether they ever heard better *Masters* than ours; or if they did, why they would leave so grave a Discipline, and suffer themselves to be seduced in a worse? But he'll find no such Thing to fasten upon us; but that, on the contrary, we reclaim *Women* from Immodesty, from falling out with their Husbands, and parting from them, from the wild Extravagancies of the Sports and Theatres, and from all Superstition whatsoever. The Youth, who are prone to Vice and Luxury, we restrain, by telling them not only how base and degenerous a thing it is to indulge their Lust, but into how much Danger they precipitate their Souls, and what Punishments the Divine Vengeance lays up for such profligate Offenders. We openly (not in Corners) promise Eternal Happiness to those who live according to the Rules of the Divine Law, who set God always before their Eyes, and whatever they do, endeavour to approve themselves to him: And Chap. 3.

Part I. is this the *Discipline*, these the *Doctrines* of Weavers, Taylors, Fullers, and the most rustick and illiterate Persons? Surely no. If at any time we refuse to produce our Instructions and Counsels before *Masters of Families*, or the *Doctors of Philosophy*, know, that if they be studious of *Vertue*, Enemies to Vice, and such as breathe after the best Things, before such we are most willing and ready to instruct our Youth, being well assured we shall find them favourable Judges. But if they be Enemies to Goodness and Vertue, and Opposers of sound wholsome Doctrine, then if we hold our peace, no Fault can justly be laid upon us: For in such Circumstances the Philosophers themselves would not discover the Dictates and Mysteries of their Philosophy. This is the *Substance* of the several Answers, which *Origen* pursues more at large through several Pages: Which, though very rational and satisfactory, yet we find something pleaded more direct and positive to the Charge; *viz.* That although amongst the *Christians* (as 'tis in any Society of Men) the vulgar and more common sort might not be Men of the sharpest Understanding or vers'd in the more polite Arts of Learning, yet wanted they not (and those no small Number) great *Scholars*, Men of acute Parts, and raised Abilities, such as had run thro' the whole *Circle* of the *Sciences*, who daily came over to them. So *Arnobius*, urging the triumphant Power and Efficacy which the Christian Faith had over the Minds of Men, Who (says he) would not believe it, when he sees in how short a time it has conquered so great a part of the World; when Men of so great Wit and Parts, *Orators*, *Grammarians*, *Rhetoricians*, *Lawyers*, *Physicians*, and *Philosophers*, have thrown up those former Sentiments, of which but a little before they were so tenacious, and have embraced the Doctrine of the Gospel? So fast did the *Christian Church* fill

Adv. Gent. l. 2. p. 21.

with

with the most eminent Professors of all parts of Learning that were then known to the World. Chap. 3.

Nor were the *Christians* of those times more despised upon the account of their *Weakness* and *Ignorance*, than they were for their *Meanness* and *Poverty*. They were looked upon as *de ultima fæce*, as the *Scum* and *Refuse* of the People, scarce a considerable Man to be found amongst them. See (says the Heathen in *Minutius Felix*) the most and best of all your Party are a *poor, beggarly, hunger-starved* Generation, that have neither Riches nor Reputation to bear them out. This Charge (however impertinent, seeing the *Goodness* of any Religion depends not upon the *Greatness* of its Professors) was yet as *untrue* as 'twas *unreasonable*; the *Christians* having amongst them Persons of the choicest Place and Quality, and after some Years, the Princes and Potentates of the World, and even the *Emperors* themselves struck sail to the *Scepter of Christ*. When *Scapula*, the *President* of *Carthage*, threaten'd the *Christians* with severe and cruel Usage, *Tertullian* bids him bethink himself: What wilt thou do (says he) with so many thousands of Men and Women of every Sex, Age, and Dignity, as will freely offer themselves? What *Fires*, what *Swords* wilt thou stand in Need of? What is *Carthage* itself like to suffer, if *decimated* by thee; when every one shall find there his near Kindred and Neighbours, and shall see there Matrons, and Men perhaps of thine own Rank and Order, and the most principal Persons, and either the Kindred or Friends of those who are thy own nearest Friends? Spare them therefore for *your own* sake, if not *for ours*. And if there were Persons of such Quality in *Africk* (so remote and in a manner so barbarous a Province) what may we suppose there were in *Rome* itself, and other Parts of the *Roman Empire*? And in his *Apology*, speaking

Pag. 91

Ad Scap. c. 4. p. 71.

Cap. 37. p. 30.

Part I. speaking of the vast spreading of the Party, Tho' (says he) we be Men of quite another way, yet have we filled all places among you; your *Cities*, *Islands*, *Castles*, *Corporations*, *Councils*, nay, your *Armies* themselves, your *Tribes*, *Companies*, yea the *Palace*, the *Senate*, and the *Courts of Justice*; only your *Temples* we have left you *free*. Sure I am, *Pliny*, in his Letter to the *Emperor*, tells him, That *Christianity* had not only over-run City and Country, but it had infected many of *every* Sex, Age, and Order of Men.

Lib. 10. *Ep.* 97.

And indeed, it were no hard matter, out of the ancient *Histories* and *Martyrologies* of the Church, nay from the *Heathen* Writers themselves, to prove, that Persons of the highest Rank and Quality (even in those Times) embraced *Christianity*, and seal'd it with their Blood. Of which, it may suffice to give an account only of some few. Not to insist upon the *Saints*, which S. *Paul* tells us were in *Nero*'s Palace, we find many considerable Persons, and some of them near a-kin to the *Emperor* under the Reign of *Domitian*, (that cruel Prince and Persecutor of *Christians*) entertaining the Profession of the *Gospel*. And first let us hear the Account which *Dion Cassius*, the famous Historian, gives us: He tells us, That about the latter end of *Domitian*'s Reign he condemned many (some whereof were slain, others stripped of their Estates) and amongst the rest *Flavius Clemens* the *Consul*, his own Cousin-German, and his Wife *Flavia Domitilla*, near *a-kin* also to the *Emperor*, upon Pretence of *Atheism* (ἐπηνέχθη ἔγκλημα ἀθεότητος) and for that they had embraced the Rites and Religion of the *Jews*. His Nephew *Clemens* he put to Death, his Wife *Domitilla* he banish'd into the Island *Pandateria*. Upon the same Account also he put to Death *Acilius Glabrio*, who together with *Trajan* had been *Consul* the year before.

Lib. 67. *in Domit. p.* 776.

That

That the Persons here described were *Christians*, is plain, partly from the Charge of *Atheism* here fastened upon them, (the common and familiar Accusation, and the Title given to *Christianity* by the Heathens, as we observed before) and partly because they are said to have passed over to the Rites and Customs of the *Jews*; nothing being more ordinary in the Historians of those times, than to mistake *Christians* for *Jews*, and to call them so, because both proceeded out of the same Country; *Christ* himself and his *Apostles* being *Jews* born, and his Religion first publish'd and planted there. And that which may give some more Countenance to this is, that *Suetonius*, speaking of *Domitian*'s condemning this *Fl. Clemens*, represents him as a Man *contemptissimæ inertiæ*, as a most contemptibly dull and sluggish Person; which we know was generally charged upon the *Christians*, that they were an *useless* and *unactive* People, as we shall have occasion by and by more particularly to remark. Besides this *Flavia Domitilla*, the Wife of *Clemens*, there was another of the same Name, his Niece by the Sister's side (unless *Dion Cassius* mistook, and put down *Wife* for *Niece*, which there's no Reason to suppose, seeing both may very well consist together) who (as *Eusebius* informs us) was with many more banish'd by *Domitian* in the Fifteenth Year of his Reign into the Island *Pontia*, and there put to Death for the Profession of *Christianity*; whose Persecutions and Martyrdoms (says he) are recorded by Heathen Writers themselves: Amongst whom (I suppose) he principally intends *Brettius* or *Brutius* the Historian, whom he cites elsewhere, and out of whom he there quotes this very Passage; *That under* Domitian *many of the Christians suffer'd Martyrdom, amongst whom was* Fl. Domitilla, *Niece by the Sister's side to* Fl. Clemens *the Consul; who for being a Christian*

Chap. 3.

In Domitian. c. 15. p. 803.

Hist. Eccl. l. 3. c. 18. p. 89.

Can. Chron. ad An. Chr. 97. p. 208. & Chron. p. 80. Edit. Græc.

Part I.

stian was baniſh'd into the Iſland Pontia. She is ſaid, after a great deal of hard and tedious Uſage, to have been *burnt*, together with the Houſe wherein ſhe was: Her Memory celebrated in the *Roman Kalendar* upon the 7th of *May*.

Martyr. Rom. ad 7 Maii.

Beſides theſe, we find that *Chriſtianity* getting ground under the quiet Reign of the Emperor *Commodus*, many of the greateſt Birth and Fortunes in *Rome*, together with their whole Families, flock'd over to the *Chriſtian* Faith. Amongſt whom was *Apollonius*, a Man famous for Philoſophy, and all polite human Literature, who ſo gallantly pleaded his Cauſe before the *Senate*, and was himſelf a *Senator*, as S. *Hierom* informs us. I ſhall but mention one Inſtance more, and that is of *Philip* the *Emperor*, whom *Euſebius* expreſly affirms to have been a *Chriſtian*, and the firſt of the *Emperors* that was ſo, follow'd herein by a whole Troop both of ancient and modern Writers. Nay, we are told by ſome a formal Story, that this *Philip* and his *Son* were converted by the Preaching of *Pontius* the Martyr, and baptized by *Fabian*, Biſhop of *Rome*. But notwithſtanding the Smoothneſs of the Story, and the Number of Authorities, I muſt confeſs it ſeems to me ſcarcely probable, that a Perſon of ſo bad a Life, guilty of ſuch enormous Villanies, as that *Emperor* was, ſhould either be, or be thought a *Chriſtian*; or if he was, that the whole World ſhould not preſently ring of it. Certain I am, that all Hiſtorians of that Time are wholly ſilent in the Caſe; nor is there the leaſt Intimation of any ſuch thing in any Writer, either *Heathen* or *Chriſtian*, before *Euſebius*. Nay *Origen*, who wrote his Book in Defence of *Chriſtianity* under the Reign of this very *Emperor*, and about this very Time (nay, and two Epiſtles, one to *Philip*, the other to his Wife *Severa*, if we may believe *Euſebius*) yet not only makes no Men-

Euſeb. l. 5. c. 21. p. 189.

De Script. Eccl. in Apol.

L. 6. c. 34. p. 232.

Act. Pont. apud Sur. ad 14 Maii, tom. 3.

tion

tion of it, when it would have made greatly for his purpose, but tacitly implies there was no such thing. For *Celsus* reproving the *Boldness* and *Petulancy* of the *Christians*, as if they should give out, that if they could but bring over the present *Emperors* to their Religion, all other Men would quickly be brought over; *Origen* point-blank denies the Charge, and tells him there's no need of any Answer, for that none of the *Christians* ever said so. An Answer which surely he would not have given, had the *Emperor* at that time been a *Christian:* Not to insist upon many other Intimations which might be produced out of that Book against it. Besides, *Eutropius* reports, that *Philip* and his *Son* being slain by the Soldiers, were yet *inter Divos relati, deify'd,* or advanced into the Number of their *Gods:* An *Honour* which 'tis certain the *Senate* would not have done them, had they either been, or but suspected to have been *Christians.* To all which I may add, that *Eusebius* himself (in whom the first Foot-steps of this Story appear) builds it upon no better a Foundation than a κατέχει λόγος, a bare *Tradition* and *Report.* That which seems to have given both Birth and Colour to the Story, is this: One *Philippus*, an *Illustrious* Person under the Emperor *Severus*, was a long time *Governor* of *Egypt*; he, by the Means of his Daughter *Eugenia*, was converted to *Christianity*, under whose Shelter the *Christians* there enjoy'd great Peace and Favour; (nay the Story adds, tho' certainly without any Ground, that he was created Bishop of *Alexandria*) till the Emperor, being acquainted with his being a Christian, presently removed him, and by the Help of his Successor *Terentius*, caused him to be secretly murder'd and made away. This (if any thing) was the Rise of the Story; and that which makes it more probable is, the Honour and Excellency of that Employment, the

Chap. 3.

Adv. Cels. l. 8. p. 425.

Hist. Rom. l. 9. non longe ab init.

L. 7. c. 34.

Martyr. Eugen. apud Sur. ad 25. Dec. Tom. 6.

Part I. greateſt of all the Offices in the *Roman* Empire, the Command and State little leſs than *Regal*; and therefore the Emperors, in their Letter to this *Philip*, (wherein they reproach him for *Ingratitude* and *Apoſtacy*) tell him, that in a manner he was made a *King*, when he was choſen *Preſident* of *Egypt*. Accordingly the Title of the Governor of *Egypt* (as appears from the *Hiſtorians*, but eſpecially of the *Notitii Imperii*) was *Præfectus Auguſtalis*: And how eaſy was it to miſtake *Philippus Auguſtus*, for *Philippus Auguſtalis*? But enough of this, as alſo the Falſeneſs of that Charge, that the *Chriſtians* were ſuch a *ſorry inconſiderable* People.

But however, let us ſuppoſe them to have been as *mean* and *poor* as the Malice and Cruelty of their Adverſaries did endeavour to make them; yet this was no real Prejudice to their Cauſe, nor any great hurt to them. That the moſt part of us are accuſed to be *poor* (*ſays* Octavius *in anſwer to* Cæcilius's *Charge*) 'tis not our *Diſhonour*, but our *Glory*; the Mind, as 'tis diſſolved by Plenty and Luxury, ſo 'tis ſtrengthen'd and girt cloſe by Indigence and Frugality: And yet how can that Man be *poor*, who *wants* not, who is not greedy of what's another Man's, who is rich in and towards God? That Man is rather *poor*, who when he has a *great deal*, deſires *more*. The Truth is, no Man can be ſo poor, as he was when he was *born*: The *Birds* live without any Patrimony entail'd upon them, and the *Beaſts* find Paſtures every day; and yet theſe are born for our Uſe, all which we fully enjoy, when we do not *covet* them: Much *lighter* and *happier* does he go to Heaven, who is not *burden'd* by the Way with an *unneceſſary* load of Riches: And yet did we think *Eſtates* ſo uſeful to us, we could beg them of God, who being the *Lord* of all, might well afford a little to us; but we had rather *deſpiſe* them than *enjoy* them, and rather

rather chooſe Innocency and Patience, deſiring more to be *Good*, than to be *Great* and *Prodigal*. If we endure outward Sufferings and Tortures, 'tis not ſo much *Pain* as 'twas a *Warfare*; our Courage is increaſed by Infirmities, and Calamity is very often the *Diſcipline* of Vertue: The *Nerves* both of Body and Mind, without Exerciſe, would grow looſe and faint; and therefore God is neither *unable* to help us, nor yet *negligent* of us, as being the Governor of the World and the *Father* of his Children; but *tries* and examines every one's Temper in an adverſe State, as *Gold is tried in the Fire*. Beſides, it muſt needs be a Sight very pleaſing to God, to behold a *Chriſtian* conflicting with Grief and Miſery, preparing himſelf to *encounter* Threatnings and Torments, preſſing in upon the very Noiſe of *Death* and the Horror of the Executioner, maintaining his Liberty againſt Kings and Princes, and only yielding to God, whoſe he wholly is, coming off from all the Attempts of Adverſity with Victory and Triumph. So argues that *excellent Perſon*, (and who reads him in his *native* Language muſt confeſs it) with equal Strength of *Eloquence* and *Reaſon*; where he alſo briefly touches that *Objection* ſo common amongſt the Heathens, That if *Chriſtians* were ſo *dear* to God, why then did he ſuffer them to be oppreſs'd with ſo many Miſeries and Troubles, and not come in to vindicate and relieve them? An Argument fully cleared by *Arnobius*, *Lactantius*, and other ancient *Apologiſts* for the Chriſtian Faith. Chap. 3.

But this was not all, they were charged as a very *uſeleſs* and *unſerviceable* People, that contributed nothing to the Happineſs of the Commonwealth; nay, as *deſtructive* and *pernicious* to human Society, and as the procuring Cauſe of all thoſe Miſchiefs and Calamities that befel the World. In Anſwer

Arnob. adv. Gent. l. 2. prop. fin. *Lact. l. 5. de Juſtit. c. 22.*

Part I. swer to the first, their being *useless* as to the common Good, hear what *Tertullian* says in the Case: How can this be (*says he*) when we live amongst
Ap. c. 42. p. 33. you, have the same *Diet*, *Habit*, *Manner*, and *Way* of Life? We are no *Brachmans* or *Indian Gymnosophists*, who live in Woods, and banish themselves from all Civil Life: We are not unmindful of what we owe to our great Creator, and therefore despise none of his Creatures, tho' careful to use them with Temperance and Sobriety; wherefore we live not in the World without the Use of your *Markets*, *Shambles*, *Bathes*, *Taverns*, *Shops*, *Stables*, *your Marts*, and other ways of human Commerce; we *go to Sea* with you, *bear Arms*, *till and improve the Ground*, use *Merchandize*; we undergo *Trades* amongst you, and expose our *Works* to your Use: And how then we can seem *unserviceable* to your Affairs, with which and by which we live, I see
Ib. c. 43. not. Certainly (*says he*) if any have cause truly to complain of our being unprofitable, they are *Bawds*, *Panders*, *Pimps*, *Hectors*, *and Ruffians*, *Sellers of Poison*, *Magicians*, *Soothsayers*, *Wizards* and *Astrologers*; and to be *unserviceable* to these, is the greatest *Serviceableness*. But besides this, they pleaded for themselves, that their Religion was highly *beneficial* to the World, and in its own Nature contributed to the Peace and Happiness of Mankind. It cannot be deny'd, but that some of the *Primitive Christians* were shy of engaging in *Wars*, and not very forward to undergo publick Places of *Authority* and *Power*; but (besides that this was only the *Opinion* of some *private Persons*, and not the common and current Practice or Determination of the *Church*) it arose partly from some mistaken Passages in the *Gospel*, turning *Evangelical Councils* into *positive Precepts*; but principally because such *Offices* and Employments were usually clogg'd with such Circumstances and Conditions, as obliged them to some

ſome things repugnant to the Chriſtian Law: Otherwiſe where they could do it, without offering Violence to their Religion and their Conſcience, they ſhunn'd it not, but frequently bore *Arms*, and diſcharged ſuch Publick Offices as were committed to them; as cannot be unknown to any that are never ſo little vers'd in the *Hiſtory* of the firſt Ages of the *Church*. Never were there better, more faithful and reſolute *Soldiers*, more obedient to the Orders of their Commanders, more ready to attempt the moſt hazardous Enterprizes, never boggling at any thing which they could do without Sin. Of which, amongſt many others, I ſhall inſtance only in that of the *Thebæan Legion*, who being commanded upon a bloody and unlawful Butchery, to deſtroy and cut off the *Chriſtians*, their Brethren, meekly return'd this Anſwer to the Heathen Emperor or *Maximianus*, under whom they ſerved: We offer our *Hands* againſt any Enemy, but count it unlawful to imbrue them in the Blood of the *Innocent*. Our Swords know how to ſtrike a *Rebel* or an Enemy, but not to wound thoſe who are *Citizens and Guiltleſs*; we remember that we took up Arms for, not againſt Friends and Fellow-Citizens: We have always fought for Juſtice and Piety, and for the Safety of the Innocent; theſe have been hitherto the Price of thoſe Dangers that we have run upon; we have fought for Fidelity, which how ſhall we be able to keep to *you*, if we do not firſt keep it to *our God*? So far were the Chriſtians of thoſe Times from refuſing to engage in the Service of their Prince. Nay, thoſe of them who were ſo bound up by their private Sentiments, as not to think it lawful, yet reckoned they otherwiſe made *equivalent* Compenſation. Thus when *Celſus* preſs'd the Chriſtians to undergo publick Offices, and to help the Emperors in their Wars; *Origen* anſwers, that they did ſo, though by a *divine*

Chap. 3.

Martyrol. Adonis ad x. Kalend. Octob.

Adv. Celſ. l. 8. p. 426, 427.

Part I. *vine*, not *human* Help, by praying for their Perſons, and their Proſperity and Succeſs: Above all Men (*ſays he*) we fight for the Emperor, while we train ourſelves in Exerciſes of Piety, and contend by Prayers for him. But beſides theſe, there were ſeveral other Inſtances which the Chriſtians pleaded to vindicate themſelves from being *unſerviceable* to the Good of Mankind, amongſt which I ſhall at preſent take Notice only of theſe Two.

Firſt, That they really ſought to reclaim Men from *Vice* and *Sin*, to a good and vertuous Life; by which means (beſides that they provided for Mens higheſt and neareſt *Intereſt*, the Intereſt of their Souls, and their Eternal Happineſs in another Life) they greatly conſulted the Peace and Welfare of the Places where they lived; for vicious and wicked Men are the *Peſts* and *Plagues* of human Society, that taint and infect others by their bad Examples or Perſuaſions, and entail Vengeance upon the Places of their Reſidence; whilſt good Men engage the Favour and Bleſſing of Heaven, and both by their Counſels and Examples bring over others to Sobriety and Vertue, whereby they eſtabliſh and ſtrengthen the Foundations of Government, and the Happineſs of Civil Life. And none ſo eminent for this, as the Chriſtians of old; this is the great *triumphant* Argument, wherewith *Origen* at every turn, exalts the Honour of *Chriſtianity*: This (*ſays he*) we find in the Multitudes of thoſe that believe, who are delivered from that Sink of Vices, wherein before they were wont to wallow: Enquire into the Lives of ſome of us, compare our former and our preſent Courſe, and you will find in what Filthineſs and Impieties they tumbled, before they entertained the *Chriſtians Doctrine*; but ſince the time that they entred into it, how gentle and moderate, how grave and conſtant are they become, and ſome ſo inflamed with the Love

Adv. Celſ. lib. 1. p. 9.

Ib. p. 21.

Ib. p. 53.

of

of Purity, that they forbear what lawfully they might enjoy. How largely are the Churches of God, founded by *Christ*, ſpread over all Nations, conſiſting of ſuch as are converted from innumerable evil Ways to a better Mind! And elſewhere vindicating the Doctrine of *Chriſt* from the miſchievous Cavils of his Adverſary, he tells us, how 'twas impoſſible that could be peſtilent and hurtful, which had converted ſo many from their Vices and Debaucheries, to a Courſe moſt agreeable to Nature and Reaſon, and to a Life of Temperance and all other Vertues: And the ſame he urges frequently in other Places, and what greater Kindneſs and Benefit could be done to Men? Does *Celſus* call upon us *(ſays he)* to bear Offices for the Good of our Country; let him know that the Country is much more beholden to Chriſtians than to the reſt of Men, while they teach Men Piety towards God, the Tutelar Guardian of the Country, and ſhew them the way to that heavenly City that is above, which they that live well may attain to, tho' here they dwell in the ſmalleſt City in the World. Nor do the Chriſtians thus employ themſelves, becauſe they ſhun the publick Offices of the Civil Life; but only reſerve themſelves for the more divine and neceſſary Services of the Church, in order to the Good and Happineſs of Men; for this they think very juſt and reaſonable, that they ſhould take care of all Men; of them of their own Party, that they may every Day make them better; of others, that they may draw them to the Belief and Practice of Piety and Religion, that ſo worſhipping God in Truth, and doing what they can to inſtruct others, they may be united to the Great God, and to his Bleſſed Son, who is the Wiſdom, Truth, and Righteouſneſs, and by whom it is that every one is converted to a pious and a religious Life.

Chap. 3.

Lib. 2. p. 78.

* Theo-

Part. I.

* *De curan. Grac. affectib. Serm. 9. de Leg. p. 128.*

* *Theodoret* discourſing againſt the *Gentiles*, of the Excellency of the Laws of *Chriſt*, above any that were given by the beſt Philoſophers or wiſeſt Men amongſt the Heathens, gives them Inſtances of whole Nations whom Chriſtianity had brought off from the moſt brutiſh and ſavage Manners: He tells them of the *Perſians*, who by Laws given them by *Zarada*, lived in inceſtuous Mixtures with their own *Mothers*, *Siſters*, and *Daughters*, looking upon it as a lawful and warrantable Practice; till entertaining *Chriſtianity*, they threw off thoſe abominable Laws, and ſubmitted to that Temperance and Chaſtity which the Goſpel requires of us. And whereas before they were wont to caſt out the Bodies of their Dead to be devoured by Beaſts and Birds of Prey; ſince they embraced the *Chriſtian* Religion, they abſtained from that Piece of Inhumanity, and decently committed them to the Earth; from which they could not be reſtrained, either by the Laws of their Country, or the Bitterneſs of thoſe Torments which they underwent. The *Maſſagetes*, who thought it the moſt miſerable thing in the World to *die* any other than a violent Death, and therefore made a Law, that all Perſons arrived to old Age ſhould be offered in Sacrifice and eaten; no ſooner ſubmitted to *Chriſtianity*, but abhorred thoſe barbarous and abominable Cuſtoms. The *Tibarens*, who uſed to throw aged Perſons down the ſteepeſt Rocks; left it off, upon their Embracing of the *Goſpel*. Upon the ſame Account the *Hyrcani* and the *Caſpians* reformed their Manners; who were formerly wont to keep Dogs on purpoſe to devour the Bodies of the Dead. Nor did the *Scythians* any longer, together with their Dead, bury thoſe alive, who had been their neareſt Friends and Kindred. So great a Change (*ſays my Author*) did the Laws of *Chriſt* make in the Manners of Men, and ſo eaſily were

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the most barbarous Nations perſuaded to entertain them; a thing which *Plato*, tho' the beſt of all Philoſophers, could never affect amongſt the *Athenians*, his own Fellow-Citizens, who could never induce them to govern the Commonwealth according to thoſe Laws and Inſtitutions which he had preſcribed to them. Chap. 3.

Nay, where the Goſpel did not produce this Effect to reclaim Men from their Vices and Vanities, and to bring them over to the Religion of the crucified *Saviour*; yet had it this excellent *Influence* upon the World, that it generally taught them better Leſſons, refined their Underſtandings, and filled their Minds with more uſeful and practical Notions about Religion, than they had before. To which purpoſe it's mainly obſervable, that thoſe *Philoſophers* who lived in the Time of *Chriſtianity*, after the Goſpel publickly appeared in the World, wrote in a much more *Divine Strain*, entertained more honourable and worthy Sentiments about God and Religion, and the Duties of Men in their ſeveral Capacities, than thoſe of their Sect that went before them. Of which I conceive no Account can be given ſo ſatisfactory as this, that the *Genius* and Spirit of the Goſpel began then to fly abroad, and to breathe in a free Air, and ſo could not but leave ſome Tincture and Savour upon the Spirits of Men, tho' its moſt inveterate Enemies. Beſides that many of them did more nearly converſe with the Writings of *Chriſtianity*, which they read either out of *Curioſity*, or with a Deſign to confute and anſwer them. This doubtleſs ſharpened the Edge of their Underſtandings, and furniſhed them with better Notions, more uſeful Precepts and Rules of Life, than are to be met with in any of the old Philoſophers: Witneſs thoſe excellent and uncommon Strains of Piety, that run thorow the Writings of *Seneca*, *Epictetus*, *Antonine*, *Arrian*, *Plu-*

Μετὰ δὴ τὴ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν ἐπιφάνειαν ἔτοι, ῥώμωσι δ' χειστιανικῆς θεολογίας πολλὰ τοῖς οἰκείοις ἀνέμιξαν λόγοις. *Theod. de cur. Græc. Aff. Serm. 2. de principio. p. 33.*

Part I. *Plutarch*, *Hierocles*, *Plotinus*, and the reſt that lived in thoſe Firſt Ages of the Goſpel; of which I could give conſiderable Inſtances, were it neceſſary to my Purpoſe. I ſhall only, as a *Specimen*, ſet down that *Prayer* wherewith *Simplicius* (Enemy enough to *Chriſtianity*) concludes his Comment upon *Epictetus*; and thus he makes his Addreſs to God:

Pag. 331. Ἱκετεύω σε, Δέσποτα, ὁ πατὴρ καὶ ἡγεμὼν τοῦ ἐν ἡμῖν λόγου, ἐπομνησθῆναι μὲν ἡμᾶς τῆς ἑαυτῶν εὐγενείας ἧς ἠξίωσας ἡμᾶς παρὰ σοῦ· συμπρᾶξαι δὲ ὡς αὐτοκινήτοις ἡμῖν πρός τε κάθαρσιν τοῦ ὑποσώματος καὶ τῶν ἀλόγων παθῶν, καὶ πρὸς τὸ ὑπερέχειν καὶ ἄρχειν αὐτῶν, καὶ ὡς ὀργάνοις κεχρῆσθαι τῇ προσηκούσῃ τρόπον· Καὶ πρὸς διόρθωσιν ἀκεραίαν τοῦ ἐν ἡμῖν λόγου, καὶ ἕνωσιν αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὰ ὄντως ὄντα διὰ τῆς τοῦ ἀληθείας φωτός. Καὶ τὸ τρίτον, τὴν σωτῆρα ἱκετεύω, ἀφελεῖν τελέως τοῦ ἀχλὺν τῶν ψυχικῶν ἡμῶν ὀμμάτων, Ὄφρα γινώσκομεν δὴ (κατὰ τὸν Ὅμηρον) ἠμὲν θεὸν, ἠδὲ καὶ ἄνδρα.

I Beſeech thee, O Lord, thou that art the Father and Guide of our Rational Powers, grant that we may be mindful of thoſe Noble and Generous Natures with which thou haſt inveſted us; and aſſiſt us, that as Perſons endued with ſelf-moving Principles, we may cleanſe ourſelves from all bodily and brutiſh Paſſions; that we may ſubdue and govern them, and in a due and decent Manner uſe them, only as Organs and Inſtruments. Help us through the Light of thy Truth, accurately to correct our Reaſon, and unite it to thoſe Things that have a real Exiſtence. And in the Third Place, I beſeech my Saviour, that he would perfectly diſpel the Miſt that is before the Eyes of our Minds, that, according to that of the Poet, we may righty underſtand what belongs either to God or Man.

Beſides the *Matter* of this Prayer, which is very *ſublime* and *ſpiritual*, the *Manner* of its Compoſure is conſiderable, conſiſting of *Three Parts*, and thoſe

thoſe addreſſed as it were to *Three Perſons*, an- Chap. 3.
ſwerable to thoſe in the *Bleſſed Trinity*, the *Lord* (or *Father*) the *Saviour* (or *Chriſt*) and the *Light of Truth* (which even in Scripture is a common *Periphraſis* of the *Holy Spirit*:) Whether he intended this, I will not ſay; ſure I am, it looks very like it. But enough of this.

Secondly, That they ordinarily wrought ſuch *Miracles* as were incomparably *beneficial* to the World, in curing *Diſeaſes*, raiſing the *Dead*, and reſcuing poſſeſſed Perſons from the mercileſs Rage and Cruelty of the *Devil*: We may obſerve that in thoſe *primitive* Times, there were innumerable Multitudes of poſſeſſed Perſons, beyond what were in the Ages either before or ſince; the Divine Providence doubtleſs permitting it to be ſo, that by this means there might be a fairer Occaſion of commending *Chriſtianity* to the World; and there is nothing which we more commonly meet with in the Writings of the ancient Fathers, than Teſtimonies concerning their triumphant Power over *evil Spirits*. *Juſtin Martyr* diſcourſing of the End of *Chriſt's* coming into the World, for the Salvation of Men, and the Subverſion of Devils, tells the *Senate*; That theſe things are ſo, you may know by what is done before your Eyes, for many that were poſſeſſed by Devils, throughout the whole World, and even in *this City* of yours, whom all your *Inchanters*, *Sorcerers*, and *Conjurors* were not able to cure, many of us *Chriſtians* adjuring them by the Name of *Jeſus Chriſt*, who was *crucified* under *Pontius Pilate*, have perfectly cured, and do ſtill cure, diſarming and driving out of Men thoſe *Dæmons* that had ſeized upon them: And the ſame he affirms more than once and again in his Diſcourſe with *Trypho* the *Jew*. *Iræneus* arguing againſt the Hereticks, tells us, that the true Diſciples of Chriſt did in his Name many ſtrange things for the

Apol. 1. *p.* 45.

Adv. Hæreſ. lib. 2. *c.* 57. *p.* 218.

Part I. good of others, according as every one had received his Gift; ſome ſo ſignally expelling Devils, that thoſe out of whom they were caſt came over to the Faith; others foretelling future Events; others curing Men of the moſt grievous Diſtempers, by putting their Hands upon them, and reſtoring them to their former Health: Many that have been raiſed from the Dead, and afterwards lived many Years amongſt us. And indeed, innumerable (ſays he) are the Gifts which God has every where beſtowed upon his Church, whereby, in the Name of the crucified *Jeſus*, many and great Miracles are daily done, to the great Advantage of the World.

Ad Scap. c. 2. p. 69. *Tertullian* appeals to the Heathens, as a thing commonly known amongſt them, that they daily reſtrained the *Power of Devils*, and caſt them out of Men. And he tells *Scapula* the *Preſident*, that he might be ſatisfied of this from his own *Records*, and thoſe very Advocates who had themſelves reaped this Benefit from *Chriſtians*: As for inſtance, a certain *Notary*, and the Kinſman and Child of another; beſides divers other Perſons of Note and Quality (not to ſpeak of the meaner ſort) who had been recovered either from Devils or from deſperate Diſeaſes. Nay, *Severus* the Father of *Antoninus*, having been cured by being anointed with Oil by *Proculus* a Chriſtian, he kept him in his Palace till his Death; whom *Antininus* knew well, having been himſelf nurſed by a *Chriſtian*. And in his *Apology* he challenges the Heathens to produce any poſſeſſed Perſon before the Publick Tribunals, and the evil Spirit being commanded by any *Chriſtian* ſhall then as truly confeſs himſelf to be a *Devil*, as at other Times he falſly boaſts himſelf to be a *God*. And elſewhere putting the Caſe that the *Chriſtians* ſhould agree to retire out of the *Roman* Empire, he asks them what Protection they would then have left againſt the ſecret and inviſi-

Ib. c. 4. p. 71.

Apol. c. 37. p. 30.

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ble Attempts of Devils, who made such Havock both of their Souls and Bodies, whom the Christians so freely expelled and drove out? That it would be a sufficient Piece of Revenge, that hereby they should leave them open to the uncontrolable Possessions of those Evil Spirits. 'Twere endless to produce all the Testimonies of this nature, that might be fetch'd from *Origen*, *Minutius Felix*, *Cyprian*, *Arnobius*, *Lactantius*, *Eusebius*, and all the old Apologists for the Christian Religion, (some whereof I have briefly *noted* in the *Margin*) who constantly pleaded this as a mighty and uncontrolable Argument of the Truth and Divinity of their Religion, and of their great Usefulness to Mankind. Nay, this Miraculous Power continued in the Church some considerable Time after *Constantine* and the World was become *Christian*, as appears from S. *Basil*, *Nazianzen*, and others: And though I do not give heed to all the Miracles which are reported by S. *Hierom* in the Lives of *Hilarion*, *Paulus*, and some others; or by *Palladius* in his *Historia Lausiaca*; yet doubtless many of them were very true and real: God withdrawing this Extraordinary Power, as Christianity gained faster Footing in the World, and leaving the Church to those standing Methods by which it was to be managed and governed to the End of the World. Chap. 3.

Orig. cont. C. l. 1. p. 5, 7, 53. l. 3. p. 124. l. 7. p. 334, 376. Cypr. ep. ad Donat. p. 3. ad Demetrian. p. 201, 206. Min. Fel. p. 23. Arnob. adv. gent. l. 1. p. 13. Lact. de error. l. 2. c. 15. p. 220. Euseb. demonstr. Evang. l. 3. p. 132. Naz. Or. 1. Apol. p. 35.

And yet notwithstanding the Case was thus plain and evident, how much the World was beholden to *Christians*; yet were they looked upon as the *Pests* of Human Society, counted and called the *common Enemies of Mankind*, as *Tertullian* complains; that they were the Causes of all Publick Calamities, and that for their Sakes it was, that Vengeance did so often remarkably haunt the *Roman Empire*. This was the common Out-cry: If the *City* be besieged, (says *Tertullian*) if any thing happen ill in the *Fields*, in the *Garrisons*, in the *Islands*, presently they

Aug. de C. D. l. 22. c. 8. p. 1339. Greg. Nyss. Or. in suam ordinat. tom. 1. p. 876. Athanas. de incarn. ver. p. 74. Ap. c. 37. p. 30. Ib. c. 1. p. 2.

Part I. they cry out, *'Tis becauſe of the Chriſtians.* They conſpire the Ruin of good Men, and thirſt after the Blood of the Innocent; patronizing their Hatred with this vain Pretence, That the *Chriſtians* are the Cauſe of all publick Misfortunes and Calamities. If *Tiber* overflow the Walls, if the *Nile* do not (as 'tis wont) *overflow* the Fields, if the *Heaven* do not keep its accuſtomed Courſe, if an *Earthquake* happen, if a *Famine*, or a *Plague*; preſently the Cry is, *Away with the Chriſtians to the Lions.* Thus *Demetrian* the *Proconſul of Africk* objected to S. *Cyprian*, that they might thank the *Chriſtians*, that Wars did oftner ariſe, that Plagues and Famines did rage ſo much, and that immoderate and exceſſive Rains hindred the kindly Seaſons of the Year. The ſame, *Arnobius* tells us, the Heathens were wont to object at every turn, and to conclude it as ſure as if it had been dictated by an *Oracle*, that ſince the *Chriſtians* appeared in the World, the World had been well-nigh undone, Mankind has been over-run with infinite kinds of Evils; and the very Gods themſelves had withdrawn that ſolemn Care and Providence, wherewith they were wont to ſuperintend Human Affairs. Nay, ſo hot and common was this Charge amongſt the *Pagans*, that when the *Goths* and *Vandales* broke in upon the *Roman Empire*, S. *Auguſtine* was forced to write thoſe *excellent* Books *De Civit. Dei*, purpoſely to ſtop the Mouth of this Objection; as upon the ſame Account and at his Requeſt, *Oroſius* wrote his Seven Books of Hiſtory againſt the *Pagans.* Omitting ſome of the *Anſwers* given by the Fathers, (as being probably leſs ſolid, and not ſo proper in this Caſe) ſuch as, That it was no Wonder if Miſeries happened, and things grew worſe in this *old Age* of Time, the World daily growing more feeble and decrepit; and that theſe things had been *foretold by God*, and therefore muſt neceſſarily come to paſs; two Argu-

Ib. c. 40. p. 32.

Cyp. ad Demetr. p. 197.

Arnob. Adv. Gent. l. 1. p. 1.

Aid. Retractat. l. 2. c. 43. tom. 1. p. 52. P. Oroſ. Præf. ad Lib. Hiſt. ad D. Aug.

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ments largely and strongly pleaded by S. *Cyprian*, that those Evils were properly resolvable into natural Causes; and that every thing is not presently *evil*, because it crosses our Ease and Interest, as *Arnobius* answers. Passing by these, I shall take Notice only of two things, which the *Christians* pleaded in this Case. Chap. 3. *Ad Demet. p.* 198, 199. *Arnob. ut supra p.* 4.

First, That the *Gentiles* should do very well to seek the *true Causes* of these things nearer home, and to enquire whether 'twas not for their own Sakes, that the Divine Providence was thus offended with them, there being very just Reasons to think so. *Tertullian* points them to such Causes as these: First, their horrible *affronting* their *Natural Notions* of God, that *when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Heart was darkned, and they changed the Glory of the Uncorruptible God into an Image made like to Corruptible Man, and to Birds, and four-footed Beasts, and creeping things*; as S. *Paul* had told them long before. And that therefore 'twas reasonable to suppose, that God was more angry with them, who instead of him, worshipped Pieces of *Wood* and *Statues*, or at best *Genii* and Devils, than with those who sincerely paid their Adorations to him alone. Secondly, passing by God the great Master of all Goodness and Innocence, and the severe Revenger of all Impiety, they tumble themselves in all manner of Vice and Wickedness; and what Wonder if the Divine Justice followed close at their Heels? You are angry (says *Cyprian*) that God is angry, as if in living *ill* you deserved *well*, and as if all that has happened to you were not *less* and *lighter* than your Sins. And thou *Demetrian*, who art a Judge of *others*, be in this a Judge of *thyself*, inspect the Retirements of thy Conscience, and behold thyself now, who shalt one Day be seen naked

Ap. c. 40. *p.* 33. *Rom.* 1. 21, 22, 23. *Ap. c.* 41. *vid. Arnob. l.* 1. *p.* 6, 7. *Ut supra p.* 199, 200.

Part I. ked by all; and thou wilt find thyself enslaved and led captive by some Sins or other: And why then shouldst thou wonder that the Flames of the Divine Anger should rise higher, when the Sins of Men do daily administer more Fuel to it? An Answer which he there prosecutes to very excellent Purpose. Thirdly, their prodigious Unthankfulness to God for all the former Blessings they had received from him. So far as they were *ingrateful*, they were highly *guilty*, and God could not but punish them. Had they sought him, whom in part they could not but know, and been observant of him, they would in this Case have found him a much more propitious than an angry Deity, as *Tertullian* tells them. Upon these and such like Accounts, they might well conclude it was, that the Vengeance of God did press so hard upon them, and that therefore they had no true Reason to lay the Fault at any other Door but their own.

Secondly, As to the thing itself, as 'twas charged upon them, they point-plank denied it to be true; and that for two Reasons especially.

First, Because the World had been sadly and frequently *pestered* with such *Evils* and *Miseries* long before the *Christian Religion* appeared in it. I pray (says *Tertullian*) what Miseries did overwhelm all the World, and even *Rome* itself, before the times of *Tiberius*, *i. e.* before the coming of *Christ*? Have we not read of *Hierapolis*, and the Islands of *Delos*, and *Rhodes*, and *Cos*, destroyed with many thousands of Men? Does not *Plato* speak of the greatest Part of *Asia* and *Africk swallowed up* by the *Atlantick* Sea? An Earthquake drank up the *Corinthian* Sea, and the Force of the *Ocean* rent off *Sicilia* from *Italy*. Not to ask where were the *Christians*, the great Contemners of your Gods; but where were *your Gods* themselves when the Flood over-ran the World? *Palestine* had not yet received the *Jewish* Nation

Ap. c. 40. *p.* 32.

Nation out of *Egypt*, much less had the *Christians* sat down there, when *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and the adjacent Parts, were burnt up by a Shower of *Fire* and *Brimstone*, of which the Country smells to this Day. Nor could *Tuscia* and *Campania* complain of the *Christians*, when a Fire from Heaven destroyed the *Vulsinii* and the *Pompii*. None as yet worshipped the True God at *Rome*, when *Hannibal* at *Cannæ* made such a Slaughter of the *Romans*, that the very *Rings* that he took (*which were the Honourable Badges of none but* Roman *Knights*) were measured by the *Bushel*. They were all your Gods that then had the general Worship, when the *Gauls* took the *Capitol* itself. So smartly doth that *grave* Man retort their own Arguments upon themselves. *Arnobius* fully and elegantly pursues this, that *in this respect the former Times were no better than these*, which they so much complained of, and bids them run over the *Annals* and *Records* that were written in all Languages, and they would find, that all Nations had frequently had their common Miseries and Devastations. The Clearing of which was likewise the great Design *Orosius* proposed to himself, in drawing down the History of the World through all the Ages and Generations of it. Chap. 3. *Lib.* 1. *p.* 2, 3. *Præfat. ut supra, p.* 2.

Secondly, Because since the coming of *Christianity*, the World had been in a *better* and more *prosperous State* than it was before; especially whenever the Christian Religion met with any Favour and Encouragement. The Reason of it *Tertullian* gives: Although we should compare present with former Miseries, yet they are much lighter now, since God sent *Christians* into the World; for since then Innocency has *balanced* the Iniquities of the Age, and there have been many who have *interceded* with Heaven. The *Author of the Questions* and *Answers* in *Justin Martyr* (for that it was not *Justin* himself, I think no Man can doubt, *Apol.* c. 40. p. 33. *Qu.* 126. *p.* 474.

Part I. that reads him, the Man betraying himself openly enough to have lived in the Times of *prevailing Christianity*) putting this Question, Whether *Paganism* was not the better Religion, forasmuch as under it there was great Prosperity and Abundance; whereas 'twas quite otherwise since *Christianity* came in fashion? he answers among other things, That (besides that Plenty was no Argument of the Goodness of any Religion, Christians being to be judged of rather by the *Holiness* than the *Prosperity* of their Religion) there was so much the more Abundance in these Times of *Christianity*, by how much there were fewer Wars, than was while *Paganism* governed the World. Never were Wars more successfully managed, never was Prosperity more triumphant, than when Christians met with kind Entertainment. *Melito*, Bishop of *Sardis*, in an *Oration* which he presented to the Emperor *M. Antoninus* in Behalf of the Christians (part whereof is yet extant in *Eusebius*) tells him, that *Christianity* commencing under the Reign of *Augustus*, was a good *Omen* of the Prosperity of the Empire, and that ever since the *Majesty* of the *Roman Empire* had increased. Of whom he being the Heir and Successor, he could not better assure it to himself and his Son, than by protecting that Religion that had been born and bred up together with the Empire, and for which his Ancestors amongst other Religions had had an Esteem and Honour. That there could be no better Argument that this Religion contributed to the Happiness of the Empire, (with which it began and had grown up) than that since the Reign of *Augustus* no Misfortune, but on the contrary (according to all Mens Wishes) every thing had happened to be Magnificent and Prosperous. *Hence *Eusebius* notes once and again, that the Affairs of the Empire commonly flourished while Christianity was pro-

Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 4. c. 26. p. 148.

**Vid. lib. l. 7. c. 1. l. 8. c. 13. De Martyr. Palest. c. 3. p. 322. ad Demet. p. 200.*

protected, but when that was persecuted, Things began to go to rack, and their ancient Peace and Prosperity could not be retrieved, till Peace and Tranquillity was restored to the Christians. Therefore *Cyprian* tells the *Proconsul*, that their Cruelty to the Christians was one of those crying Sins that had provoked God to inflict so many heavy Miseries upon them, not only refusing to worship God themselves, but unjustly persecuted those innocent Persons that did, with all the Methods of Rage and Fierceness. So little hand had the Christians in entailing Vengeance upon the World, that their Enemies rather wilfully pulled it down upon their own Heads. Chap. 3.

CHAP. IV.

The Charges brought against them respecting their Life and Manners.

The Primitive Christians accused of the grossest Sins, Sacrilege, Sedition, Treason, Incest, Murder, &c. The particular Consideration of these referred to their proper Places. What they offer'd in the general, for their Vindication, consider'd. They openly asserted their Innocency, and appeal'd to the known Piety of their Lives. None accounted Christians, however eminent in Profession, unless their Lives answerable. Their abstaining from Appearance of Evil, or doing any thing that symbolized with the Idolatrous Rites of the Heathens. Their being willing to be brought to the strictest Trial, and to be severely punished, if found guilty of those Crimes. Their Com-

Complaints of being (generally) condemned merely for bearing the Name of Christians. They greatly glory'd in that Title. This Name prohibited by Julian, *and Christians commanded in Scorn to be called* Galileans. *The Christians appealed for their Vindication to the Consciences of their Impartial Enemies, and by them acquitted. The Testimonies of* Pliny, Ser. Granianus, Antonius Pius, M. Antoninus, Trypho *the* Jew, *and* Apollo's *Oracle, to this purpose. The Excellency of Christians, if compared with the best of Heathens. All such disown'd for Christians, as did not exactly conform to the Rule and Discipline of Christianity.*

ALL the Attempts that had been hitherto made against the Honour and Reputation of Christians, seem'd but like the *first Skirmishings* of an Army, in respect of the main *Battalia* that was yet behind, the Charge that was made against their **Moral Carriage** *and Behaviour*; and here they were accused at every turn of no less than *Sacrilege, Sedition,* and *High Treason*; of *Incest* and *promiscuous Mixtures*; of *Murder,* and *eating the Flesh of Infants* at their Sacramental Feasts. These were sad and horrid Crimes, and (had they been true) would justly have made Christianity stink in the Nostrils of all sober and considering Men; but they were as *false,* as they were *black* and *hellish.* The particular Answers to these Charges (together with some things relating to matters of Worship) shall be consider'd hereafter, according as they fall in their more proper Places: I shall only at present take notice of the general Vindication which the Christians made of themselves, from

from theſe Indictments which were brought in againſt them; and the Sum of what they pleaded, lies eſpecially in theſe three Things. Chap. 4.

Firſt, They did openly aſſert and maintain their *Innocency*, and ſhew by their *Lives* as well as their *Apologies*, that they were Men of quite another Make and Temper, than their Enemies did generally repreſent them. Their Religion and Way of Life was admired by all. Who (ſays S. *Clement* to the *Corinthians*) did ever dwell amongſt you, that did not approve of your excellent and unſhaken Faith? that did not wonder at your ſober and moderate Piety in Chriſt? You were forward to every good Work, adorned with a moſt vertuous and venerable Converſation; doing all things in the Fear of God, and having his Laws and Commands written upon the Tables of your Hearts. They placed Religion then, not in *talking finely*, but in *living well*. Amongſt us (ſays *Athenagoras*) the meaneſt and moſt mechanick Perſons, and old Women, altho' not able to *diſcourſe* and *diſpute* for the Uſefulneſs of their Profeſſion, do yet demonſtrate it in their Lives and Actions: They don't indeed critically weigh their *Words*, and recite elegant *Orations*, but they manifeſt *honeſt* and *vertuous* Actions; while being buffeted, they ſtrike not again; nor ſue them at Law, that ſpoil and plunder them; *Liberally give to them that ask, and love their Neighbours as themſelves.* And this we do, becauſe we are aſſured that there is a God that ſuper-intends human Affairs, who made both us and the whole World: And becauſe we muſt give to him an Account of all the Tranſactions of our Lives; therefore we chooſe the moſt moderate, human, and benign, and (to many) the moſt contemptible Courſe of Life; for we reckon that no Evil in this Life can be ſo great, tho' we ſhould be called

Clem. ep. ad Corint. p. 2, 4.

Leg. pro Chriſt. p. 12.

Part I. called to lay down our Lives, which ought to be esteemed little and of no Value in Comparison of that Happiness which we hereafter look for from the great Judge of the World, promised to those who are of an humble, benign, and moderate Conversation. *Clemens* of *Alexandria* gives us this short Account of them: As the fairest Possession, we give ourselves to God, entirely loving him, and reckoning this the great Business of our Lives. No Man is with us a *Christian*, or accounted truly rich, temperate, and generous, but he that is pious and religious; nor does any farther bear the Image of God, than he speaks and believes what is just and holy. *So that this in short is the State of us who follow God:* Such as are our *Desires*, such are our *Discourses*; such as are our *Discourses*, such are our *Actions*; such as are our *Actions*, such is our *Life:* So universally good is the whole Life of *Christians.* Certainly none were ever greater Enemies to a naked Profession, and the covering a bad Life under the Title of *Christianity.* Do any live otherwise than *Christ* hath commanded? 'tis a most certain Argument they are no *Christians*, tho' with their Tongues they never so smoothly profess the Christian Doctrine; for 'tis not *mere Professors*, but those who live according to their Profession, that shall be saved, as *Justin Martyr* declares before the *Emperors.* Let no Man (says *Basil*) impose upon himself with inconsiderate Words, saying, Tho' I be a *Sinner*, yet I am a *Christian*, and I hope that Title will be my Shelter. But hearken, *Sinner*, all wicked Men shall be bundled up together, and in the great Day of the Divine Vengeance shall be indifferently thrown into those merciless and devouring Flames.

Admonit. 2. ad genu. Pag. 76.

Ap. 2. p. 63.

Comment. in c. 1. Esa. to. 2. p. 28.

Nay,

Nay, ſo careful were they to avoid all Sin, that they ſtood at a wide Diſtance from any thing that (tho' lawful in itſelf) yet ſeem'd to carry an *ill Colour* with it. This, *Origen* tells *Celſus*, was the Reaſon why they refuſed to do any Honour to an Image, leſt thereby they ſhould give Occaſion to others to think that they aſcribed Divinity to them. For this Reaſon they ſhunn'd all *Community* with the Rites and Cuſtoms of the Heathens; *abſtaining from things ſtrangled*, or that had been *offer'd to Idols*, from frequenting the *publick Baths*, or going to the *Sights* and *Shews*, becauſe they ſeem'd to owe their Original to *Idolatry*, and were the Occaſion of many groſs Enormities. They refuſed to wear *Crowns of Laurel*, leſt they ſhould ſeem to patronize the Cuſtom of the *Gentiles*, who were wont to do ſo in their ſacred and ſolemn Rites; as appear'd eminently in the Solemnnities of the Emperors *Severus* and *Caracalla:* When the *Tribune* deliver'd the *Donative* to the Soldiers, and all came to receive it with Crowns upon their *Heads*, one of them brought his in his Hand, and being demanded the Reaſon, anſwer'd that he was a Chriſtian, and could not do it. Which was the Occaſion of *Tertullian*'s Book *De Corona Militis*, wherein he ſets himſelf to defend it. Chap. 4. *Lib. 7. p. 375.*

Secondly, They were willing to put themſelves upon the *ſtricteſt* Trial, and to undergo the *ſevereſt* Penalties, if found guilty of thoſe Crimes that were charged upon them. So their *Apologiſt* beſpeaks the *Emperors:* We beſeech you (ſays he) that thoſe things that are charged upon the *Chriſtians* may be enquired into, and if they be found to be ſo, let them have their deſerved Puniſhment; nay, let them be more ſeverely puniſh'd than other Men; but if not guilty, then 'tis not reaſonable that innocent Perſons ſhould ſuffer merely upon Report and Clamour. And ſpeaking of thoſe that *J. Martyr. Ap. 2. p. 54.*

only

Part I. only took Sanctuary at the Name of *Christians*, he adds, that those who lived not according to the Laws of *Christ*, and were only called by his Name, they begg'd of them that such might be punish'd.

Leg. pro Christian. p. 3. To the same purpose, *Athenagoras*, in his *Embassy*, taking Notice how their Enemies laid wait for their Lives and Fortunes, loaded them with Heaps of Reproaches, charging 'em with Things that never so much as enter'd into their Minds, and of which their Accusers themselves were most guilty, he makes this Offer: Let but any of us be convict of any Crime, either small or great, and we refuse not to be punish'd, nay, are ready to undergo the most cruel and heavy Penalty: But if we be only accused for our Name (and to this day all our Accusations are but the Figments of obscure and uncertain *Fame*, no Christian having ever been convict of any Fault) then we hope it will become such *wise, gracious, and mighty* Princes as you are, to make such Laws as may secure us from those Wrongs and Injuries. But alas! so clear was their Innocency, that their bittereſt Adversaries durst not suffer them to come to a fair open Trial. If

Ap. c. 2. p. 2. you be so certain that we are guilty (says *Tertullian* to the Heathens) why then are we not treated in the same Nature with all *Malefactors*, who have Leave both by themselves and their *Advocates* to defend their Innocency, to answer and put in Pleas; it being unlawful to condemn any before they be heard, and have Liberty to defend themselves? Whereas *Christians* only are not permitted to speak any thing that might clear their Cause, maintain the Truth, and make the Judge able to pronounce righteous Sentence. 'Tis enough to justify the publick *Odium*, if we do but confess ourselves *Christians*, without ever examining of the Crime; contrary to the manner of Procedure against all other Delinquents, whom 'tis not enough barely to charge to

be

be *Murderers*, *Sacrilegious*, or *Inceſtuous*, or *Enemies* to the *Publick* (the *Titles* you are pleaſed to beſtow upon us) unleſs they alſo take the Quality of the Fact, the Place, Manner, Time, Partners, and Acceſſories under Examination. But no ſuch Favour is ſhewn to us, but we are condemn'd without any *Inquiſition* paſs'd upon us. And good Reaſon there was that they ſhould take this Courſe, ſeeing they could really find nothing to condemn them for, but for being *Chriſtians*. This one would think ſtrange, eſpecially amongſt a People ſo renown'd for *Juſtice* and *Equity* as the *Romans* were, and yet in theſe Times nothing more ordinary. Therefore when *Urbicius*, the *Prefect of Rome*, had condemn'd *Ptolemæus* merely upon his confeſſing himſelf a Chriſtian, one *Lucius*, that ſtood by, cry'd out, *What ſtrange Courſe is this! What infamous Miſdemeanour is this Man guilty of, that when he's no Adulterer, Fornicator, no Murderer, no Thief, nor Robber, thou ſhould'ſt puniſh him only becauſe he calls himſelf a Chriſtian? Certainly* Urbicius, *ſuch Juſtice as this does not become the Piety of the Emperor, or the Philoſophy of* Cæſar *his Son, or the Sacred and Venerable Senate.* And *Tertullian* tells us, 'twas the common Accuſation they had in their Mouths: *Such or ſuch a one is a good Man, only he is a Chriſtian*; or *I wonder at ſuch a one, a wiſe Man, but lately turn'd Chriſtian.* So *Cyprian*, I remember, reduces his Adverſary to this unavoidable *Dilemma*; Chooſe one of theſe two Things, To be a Chriſtian either is a Fault, or 'tis not; if it be a *Fault*, why doſt thou not kill every one that confeſſes it? if it *be not*, why doſt thou perſecute them that are innocent? Hence we find nothing more common in the old *Apologiſts*, than Complaints concerning the Unreaſonableneſs of being accuſed, condemn'd, and puniſh'd merely for their *Name*; this being the firſt and great Cauſe of all that Hatred and Cruelty that was exerciſed

Chap. 4.

J. Martyr. Ap. 1. p. 43.

Ap. c. 3. *p.* 4.

Ad Demet. p. 200. *Vid. Tert. Ap. c.* 1, 2, 3. *Juſt. Mart. Ap.* 2. *p.* 54. 68. 69. *Athen. leg. pro Chriſt. p.* 3, 4.

Part I. exercised towards them; 'twas the innocent Name that was hated in them; all the Quarrel was about this Title; and when a Christian was guilty of nothing else, 'twas this made him guilty, as *Tertullian* complains at every turn. The Truth is, they mightily glory'd in this *Title*, and were ambitious to own it in the Face of the greatest Danger. Therefore when *Attalus*, the famous *French Martyr*, was led about the *Amphitheatre*, that he might be exposed to the Hatred and Derision of the People, he triumph'd in this, that a *Tablet* was carry'd before him with this Inscription, THIS IS *ATTALUS* THE CHRISTIAN. And *Sanctus* (another of them) being oft ask'd by the *President* what his Name was, what his City and Country, and whether he was a Free Man or a Servant? answer'd nothing more to any of them, than that he was a *Christian*; professing this Name to be Country, Kindred, and all things to him. Nay, so great was the Honour and Value which they had for this Name, that *Julian* the Emperor (whom we commonly call the *Apostate*) endeavour'd by all ways to suppress it, that when he could not drive the Thing, he might at least banish the Name out of the World; and therefore did not only himself constantly call Christians *Galileans*, but made a *Law* that they should be called only by that Name. But to return, the Sum is this; the Christians were so bouyed up with the Conscience of their Innocency, that they cared not who saw them, were willing and desirous to be scanned and searched to the bottom, and to lie open to the View of all; and therefore desire no other Favour than that the *Apology*, which *Justin Martyr* presented to them, might be set out with the Decree of the *Senate*, that so People might come to the true Knowledge of their Case, and they be deliver'd from false Suspicions, and those Accusations, for which they had been

Eus. Hist. Eccl. l. 5. c. 1. p. 162.

Ib. p. 158.

Naz. Invect. in Julian. 1. p. 81.

Ap. 1. p. 51.

been undeservedly exposed to so many Punish- Chap. 4.
ments.

Thirdly, They appealed for their Vindication to the Judgment and Conscience of their more sober and impartial Enemies, and were accordingly acquitted by them, as guiltless of any heinous Crimes. *Pliny* the younger, being commanded by the Emperor *Trajan*, to give him an Account of the *Christians*, tells him, That after the best Estimate that he could take, and the strictest Inquisition that he could make by Tortures, he found no worse of them than this; That they were wont to meet early for the Performance of their solemn Devotions, and to bind themselves under the most *sacred Obligations* to commit no Vice or Wickedness; and that their Religion was nothing else but an Untoward and Immoderate Superstition. This is the *Testimony* which that great Man (who being *Proconsul* of *Bithynia*, was capable to satisfy himself, and who was no less diligent to search into the Matter) gives concerning them. Next after him, *Serenus Granianus* (the *Proconsul* of *Asia*) writes to the Emperor *Adrian*, *Trajan*'s Successor, to represent to him how unjust it was to put Christians to Death, when no Crime was duly laid to their Charge, merely to gratify the tumultuous Clamours of the People: To whom the *Emperor* answers, That they should not be unjustly troubled; that if any thing was truly proved against them, he should punish them according to the nature of the Fault; but if done out of Malice or Spite, he should then accordingly punish the Accuser as a Calumniator. Next to *Adrian*, *Antoninus Pius*, (if he be not mistaken for his Successor *Marcus*) in his Epistle to the *Commons* of *Asia*, tells them, That they had traduced the *Christians*, and had objected those Crimes to them which they could not prove; that they were more firm and undaunt-

Ep. l. 10. Ep. 97.

Euseb. Ec. Hist. l. 4. c. 8, 9. p. 122.

Just. Mart. Ap. 2. p. 100.

Part. I. ed in their * Profession than themselves, and had a greater Freedom and Confidence towards God; and that therefore he resolved to ratify and follow the Determination of his Fathers. After him comes *M. Antoninus*, who having obtained that famous and signal Victory against the *Quades* in *Germany*, confesses in his Letter to the Senate, (which Letter, tho' I know 'tis question'd by some Learned Men, as now extant, whether true and genuine; yet that there was such a Letter, is evident enough from *Tertullian*, who himself lived within a few Years of that Time, and appeals to it) that it was clearly gotten by the Prayers of the *Christian Legion* which he had in his Army, and therefore commands that none be molested for being Christians; and that if any accuse a Christian for being such, without a sufficient Crime proved against him, he shall be burnt alive for his Accusation: That a Christian confessing himself to be one, shall be safe and secure, and that the *Governor* of the *Province* shall not drive him to renounce his Profession; and this he commands to be confirmed by the Decree of the *Senate*. So clear did the Christians appear to their greatest Enemies, especially in their more calm and sober Intervals. Nay, *Trypho* the *Jew* (and that very Notion speaks him Enemy enough) yet confesses them clear of those foul Aspersions: For when the *Martyr* had asked him, whether he disliked the Christians Manners and Way of Life, and whether he really believed that they eat Mens Flesh, and putting out the Candles ran together in promiscuous Mixtures; the *Jew* answer'd, That those things whereof they were accused by many were unworthy of Belief, as being so extremely abhorrent to Human Nature; and that the Precepts which are commanded in their Gospel (which his Curiosity had prompted him to *read*) were so *great* and *admirable*,

* Εὐπαρρησίας ὄντες.

Ib. p. 101, 102.

Ap. c. 5. *p.* 6. *& ad Sca. c.* 4. *p.* 71.

Just. Martyr. Dial. cum Tryph. p. 227.

mirable, that he ſuppoſed no Man could be able to keep and obey them. And, to inſtance in no more, the *Heathen Oracle* itſelf pronounced in favour of the Chriſtians; for *Apollo* giving forth his Oracles, not as he was wont by human Voice, but out of a dark and diſmal *Cavern*, confeſſed it was becauſe of *juſt Men* that lived upon the Earth: And when *Diocleſian* enquired who thoſe juſt Men were, one of the Heathen *Prieſts* that ſtood by anſwer'd, That they were the *Chriſtians*. This *Conſtantine the Great* tells us he himſelf heard, being then a young Man, and in Company at that time with the Emperor *Diocleſian*, and he there ſolemnly calls God to witneſs for the Truth of the Story. Chap. 4. *Euſeb. de vit. Conſt. l. 2. c. 50, 51. p. 467.*

From all which it appears, how innocent the Chriſtians were of thoſe things which the *Gentiles* charged upon them, how infinitely ſtrict and unblamable in their Lives, and therefore triumphed over the Heathens in the Purity and Innocency of their Converſations. *Origen* tells *Celſus*, that the Churches of God which had taken upon them the Diſcipline of *Chriſt*, if compared to the common Societies of Men, *were amongſt them like Lights in the World.* For who (ſays he) is here, but he muſt needs confeſs that the worſer Part of our Church is much better than the popular Aſſemblies? As for inſtance; the *Church* of God at *Athens* is meek and quiet, as endeavouring to approve itſelf to the great God; whereas now the *popular Aſſembly* of *Athens* is ſeditious and tumultuous, and no ways to be compared with the Church of God in that City. And the ſame may be ſaid of the Churches of God, and the vulgar Aſſemblies which are at *Corinth* or *Alexandria*. So *Minutius Felix*; Should we Chriſtians be compared with you, altho' our Diſcipline may ſeem ſomewhat inferior, yet we ſhould be found infinitely to tranſcend you. You forbid Adultery, and then *practiſe* it; we keep entirely *Lib. 3. p. 128, 129.* *Pag. 295*

Part I. to our own Wives. You puniſh Wickedneſs when *committed*, with us even a wicked *Thought* is Sin; you ſtand in Awe of thoſe who are *conſcious* of your Crimes, we of nothing but our *Conſciences*, without which we cannot be. And laſt of all, 'tis with your *Party* that the Priſon is filled and crouded; no *Chriſtian* is there, unleſs ſuch a one as is either a Shame to his Religion, or an Apoſtate from it. And a little after, he tells his Adverſary, how much they exceeded the beſt Philoſophers, who were filthy and tyrannical, and only eloquent to declaim againſt thoſe Vices, of which themſelves were moſt guilty: That we Chriſtians do not meaſure Wiſdom by Mens Habits, but by their Minds and Tempers, and do not ſpeak great Things, but live them; having this to boaſt of, that we really attain to thoſe things which they earneſtly ſought, but could not find. Thus *Lactantius* having excellently diſcourſed of the prodigious Debaucheries and Wickedneſſes of the Heathens; but which of theſe Things (ſays he) can be objected to our People, whoſe whole Religion is to live *without Spot or Blemiſh?* From whence they might eaſily gather, had they any Underſtanding, that Piety is on our ſide, and that they themſelves are vile and impious. And *Euſebius* tells us, that in his time the Chriſtian Faith had by Gravity, Sincerity, Modeſty, and Holineſs of Life, ſo conquer'd all Oppoſition, that none durſt beſpatter it, or charge it with any of thoſe Calumnies which the ancient Enemies of our Religion uſed to faſten upon it. What Religion (ſays *Arnobius*) can be truer, more uſeful, powerful, juſt, than this? Which (as he elſewhere notes) renders Men Meek, Speakers of Truth, Modeſt, Chaſte, Charitable, Kind, and Helpful to all, as if moſt nearly related to us. And indeed, this is the genuine and natural Tendency of the Chriſtian Doctrine,

Pag. 31.

De juſtit. l. 5. c. 9. p. 485.

Hiſt. Eccl. l. 4. c. 7. p. 121. Vid. Conſtant. Or. ad cœtum. S. S. c. 23. p. 599.

Adv. gent. l. 4. p. 67.

and

and which it cannot but effect where-ever 'tis kindly embraced and entertained. So true is that which *Athenagoras* told the *Emperors*, that no *Christian* could be a bad Man, unless he were an *Hypocrite*. And *Tertullian* openly declares, That when Men depart from the Discipline of the Gospel, they so far cease amongst us to be accounted *Christians*. And therefore when the Heathens objected, That some that went under that Name were guilty of great Enormities, and enquired, how comes such a one to be a Cheat, if the Christians be so righteous; how so cruel, if they be merciful? he answers, That by this very Thing they bore witness, that they who were real Christians were not such; that there's a vast Difference between the *Crime* and the *Name*, the *Opinion* and the *Truth*; that they are not presently Christians that are called so, but cheat others by the Pretence of a Name; that they shunn'd the Company of such, and did not meet or partake with them in the Offices of Religion; that they did not admit *those* whom mere Force and Cruelty had driven to deny *Christianity*, much less such as voluntarily transgressed the Christian Discipline: And that therefore the Heathens did very ill to call them *Christians*, whom the Christians themselves did disown, who yet were not wont to deny their own Party.

Chap. 4.

Leg. pro Christian. p. 4. Ap. c. 46. p. 36. Ad Nat. l. 1. c. 5. p. 42.

CHAP. V.

Of the Positive Parts of their Religion; and first, of their Piety towards God.

The Religion of the ancient Christians consider'd, with respect to God, themselves, and other Men. Their Piety seen in two things; their Detestation of Idolatry, and great Care about the Matters of Divine Worship. What Notion they had of Idolatry; their Abhorrency of it. Their refusing to give Divine Honour to Angels and created Spirits: This condemned by the Laodicean *Council. Their denying any thing of Divine Honour to Martyrs and departed Saints. The famous Instance of the Church of* Smyrna, *concerning S.* Polycarp. *S.* Augustine's *Testimonies to this Purpose. Their mighty Abhorrence of the Heathen Idolatry. The very making an Idol accounted unlawful. Hatred of Idolatry one of the first Principles instill'd into new Converts. Their affectionate bewailing any that lapsed into this Sin. Several severe Penalties imposed by the ancient Council of* Illiberis, *upon Persons guilty of Idolatry: They were willing to hazard any thing, rather than sacrifice to the Gods.* Constantius's *Plot to try the Integrity of his Courtiers. A double Instance of the Christian Soldiers in* Julian's *Army; their active Zeal in breaking the Images of the Heathen Gods, and assaulting Persons while doing Sacrifice*

Sacrifice to them; this, whether justifiable. Notwithstanding all this, the Christians accused by the Heathens of Idolatry; of worshipping the Sun; whence that Charge arose. Of adoring a Cross. Of worshipping an Ass's Head. Christians called Asinarii. *The absurd and monstrous Picture of Christ mention'd by* Tertullian. *The Occasion of this ridiculous Fiction, whence.*

Chap. 5.

HAving thus seen with how much Clearness the ancient Christians vindicated themselves from those unjust Aspersions, which their spiteful and malicious Adversaries had cast upon them; we come now to take a more direct and positive View of their Religion, which, according to S. *Paul*'s Division, we shall consider as to their *Piety* towards God, those *Vertues* which more immediately concerned *themselves*, and those which respected their Behaviour and Carriage towards *others*. Their *Piety* towards God appear'd in those two main Instances of it, a serious and hearty Detestation of Idolatry, and a religious Care about the Concerns of Divine Worship.

Tit. 2. 12.

Idolatry in those Times was the prevailing Sin of the World, *the principal Crime of Mankind, the great Guilt of the Age, and the almost sole Cause of Mens being brought into Judgment*; as what in a Manner contains all Sins under it, as *Tertullian* begins his Book upon that Subject; a Crime of the *first Rank*, and one of the *highest sorts of Wickedness*, as 'tis called by the most *ancient Council* in *Spain*. They looked upon it as a Sin that undermined the very Being of the Deity, and ravished the Honour of his Crown. Before we proceed any farther, we shall first enquire what was the Notion they generally had of Idolatry;

De Idololat. c. 1. *p.* 85.

Conc. Illiberit. Can. 1.

Part I. and they then accounted that a Man was guilty of Idolatry, when he gave *Divine Adoration* to any thing that was *not God*; not only when he worshipped a *material Idol*, but when he vested *any Creature* with that religious Respect and Veneration that was only due to God: Idolatry (says *Tertullian*) robs God, denying him those Honours that are due to him, and conferring them upon others, so that at the same time it does both *Defraud* him and *Reproach* him. And a little after he expresly affirms, That whatever is exalted above the Standard of *Civil Worship*, in Imitation of the Divine Excellency, is directly made an Idol. Thus S. *Gregory*, for his solid and excellent Learning call'd *The Divine*, (a Title never given to any besides him, but to S. *John* the *Apostle*) defines Idolatry (which, *says he*, is the greatest Evil in the World) to be *the Translation of that Worship, that is due to the Creator, upon the Creature*. Accordingly we find them infinitely zealous to assert Divine Adoration as the proper and incommunicable Prerogative of God alone, and absolutely refusing to impart religious Worship to any, though the best of Creatures: Surely if any, one would think, *Angels*, the first Rank of *created* Beings, Creatures of such sublime Excellencies and Perfections, might have challenged it at their Hands; but hear what *Origen* says to this; We adore, *says he*, our Lord God, and serve him *alone*, following the Example of *Christ*, who when tempted by the Devil to fall down and worship him, answer'd, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*; which is the Reason why we refuse to give Honours to those Spirits that *preside* over human Affairs, because *we cannot serve two Masters*, to wit, *God* and *Mammon*:

Ut supra c. 11.

Ib. c. 15. *p.* 95.

Greg. Naz. Orat. Paneg. in Nativit. Christi. Or. 38. *p.* 620.

Cont. Celf. l. 8. *p.* 415, 416.

As

As for these *Dæmons*, we know that they have no Administration of the Conveniences of Man's Life; yea, tho' we know that they are not *Dæmons* but *Angels*, that have the Government of Fruits and Seasons, and the Productions of Animals committed to them; we indeed speak *well* of them, and think them *happy* that they are intrusted by God to manage the Conveniences of Man's Life; but yet do not give them that Honour that is only due to God: for this neither does God allow of, neither do they desire it; but equally love and regard us when we do not, as if we did sacrifice to them. And when *Celsus* a little before had smartly pressed him to do Honour to *Dæmons*, he rejects the Motion with great Contempt: Away, *says he*, with this Counsel of *Celsus*, who in this is not in the least to be hearkened to; for the Great God only is to be adored, and Prayers to be delivered up by none but his only begotten Son, *the First-born of every Creature*, that, as *our High Priest*, he may carry them to *his Father* and to *our Father*, *to his God* and *to our God*. 'Tis true, that the Worship of *Angels* did (and that very early, as appears from the *Apostles* Caveat against it in his *Epistle* to the *Colossians*) creep into some Parts of the Christian Church, but was always disowned and cried out against, and at last publickly and solemnly condemned by the whole *Laodicean Council: It is not lawful* (*says the thirty fifth Canon of that Council*) *for Christians to leave the Church of God, and to go and invocate Angels, and to make prohibited Assemblies: If therefore any one should be found devoting himself to this private Idolatry, let him be accursed; forasmuch as he has forsaken the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and has delivered up himself to Idolatry.* From which nothing can be more clear, than that it was the Sense of these *Fathers*, that the *Worshipping of Angels* was not only

Chap. 5.

Pag. 395.

Part. I. ly downright *Idolatry*, but a plain *Apoſtaſy* from the Chriſtian Faith.

Nor were they more peremptory in denying Divine Honour to *Angels*, than they were to *Martyrs* and *departed Saints*: For tho' they had a mighty Honour and Reſpect for *Martyrs* (as we ſhall take Notice afterwards) as thoſe that had maintained the Truth of their Religion, and ſealed it with their Blood, and therefore did what they could to do Praiſe and Honour to their Memories; yet were they far from placing any thing of Religion or Divine Adoration in it: Whereof it will be enough to quote one famous Inſtance. The Church of *Smyrna*, writing to the Churches of *Pontus*, to give them an Account of the Martyrdom of *Polycarpus* their Biſhop, tells them, That after he was dead, many of the Chriſtians were deſirous to have gotten the *Remains* of his Body, to have given them decent and honourable Burial, but were prevented in it by ſome *Jews*, who importuned the *Proconſul* to the contrary; ſuggeſting, that the Chriſtians leaving their *crucified* Maſter, might henceforth worſhip *Polycarpus*; whereupon they add, that this Suggeſtion muſt needs proceed from Ignorance of the true State of Chriſtians: *This they did* (ſay they) *not conſidering how impoſſible it is, that ever we ſhould either forſake Chriſt, who died for the Salvation of Mankind, or that we ſhould worſhip any other. We adore him as the Son of God; but the Martyrs, as the Diſciples and Followers of our Lord, we deſervedly love for their eminent Kindneſs to their own Prince and Maſter, whoſe Companions and Fellow-Diſciples we alſo by all means deſire to be.* This Inſtance is ſo much the more valuable in this Caſe, not only becauſe ſo *plain* and *pertinent*, but becauſe ſo *ancient*, and from Perſons of ſo great *Authority* in the Church: For this is not the Teſtimony of any one private Perſon, but of the whole Church of

Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 4. c. 15. p. 134.

of *Smyrna*, according as it had been trained up under the Doctrine and Discipline of *Polycarpus*, the immediate Disciple of S. *John*. This was the Doctrine and Practice of Christians then; and it held so for some Ages after, even down to the Times of S. *Augustine*; when yet, in many other things, the Simplicity of the Christian Religion began to decline apace: We set apart, *says he*, no *Temples*, nor *Priests*, nor *Divine Services*, nor *Sacrifices* to *Martyrs*, because they are *not God*, but the same who is theirs, is our God: Indeed we honour their *Memories* as of holy Men, who have stood for the Truth, even unto Death, that so the true Religion might appear, and those which are false might be convinced to be so; but who ever heard a *Priest* standing at the *Altar*, built for the Honour and Worship of God over the Body of the holy *Martyr*, to say in his Prayers, *I offer Sacrifice to thee* Peter, *or* Paul, *or* Cyprian? for in such Commemorations we offer to that God, who made them both Men and Martyrs, and has made them Partners with holy Angels in the heavenly Glory; and by these Solemnities we both give Thanks to the true God for the Victories which they have gain'd, but also stir up ourselves by begging his Assistance, to contend for such Crowns and Rewards as they are possessed of: So that whatever Offices religious Men perform in the *Places* of the *Martyrs*, they are only *Ornaments* to their Memories, not *Sacrifices*, or Divine Services done to the Departed, as if they were Deities. More to the same Purpose we may find in that Place, as also in infinite other Places of his Works; where (were it worth the while) I could easily shew, that he does no less frequently than expressly assert, That tho' the *Honour* of *Love*, *Respect and Imitation*, yet no *religious Adoration* is due either to *Angels*, *Martyrs*, or *departed Saints*.

Aug. de Civ. Dei l. 8. c. 27. p. 49. vid. l. 22. c. 10. col. 1355.

But

Part I. But the great Instance wherein the Primitive *Christians* manifested their Detestation of Idolatry, was in respect of the *idolatrous Worship* of the Heathen World, the denying and abhorring any thing of Divine Honour that was done to their Gods. They looked upon the very *making* of Idols (tho' with no Intention to worship them) as an unlawful Trade, and inconsistent with *Christianity*: *How have we renounced the Devil and all his Angels*, (says *Tertullian*, meaning their *solemn Renunciation in Baptism*) *if we make Idols? nor is it enough to say, tho' I make them, I do not worship them; there being the same Cause not to make them, that there is not to worship them*, viz, *the Offence that in both is done to God; yet thou dost so far worship them, as thou makest them that others may worship them.* And therefore he roundly pronounces, that no *Art*, no *Profession*, no *Service* whatsoever, that is employed either in *making* or *ministring* to Idols, can come short of Idolatry. They startled at any thing that had but the least *Shadow* of symbolizing with them in their Idolatry; therefore the *Ancyran* Council condemned them to a two Years Suspension from the *Sacrament*, who sat down with their *Heathen Friends* upon their solemn Festivals in their *Idol Temples*, altho' they brought their own Provisions along with them, and touched not one Bit of what had *been* offered to the Idol. Their first Care in instructing new Converts, was to leaven them with the Hatred of Idolatry: *Those that are to be initiated into our Religion* (says *Origen*) *we do before all things instil into them a great Dislike and Contempt of all Idols and Images, and lift up their Minds from worshipping Creatures instead of God, to him who is the great Creator of the World.* If any thro' Weakness chanced at any time to lapse into this Sin, how *pathetically* did they bewail it? So *Celerinus*, in his *Epistle* to *Lucian*, giving him an Account of a Woman,

De Idololat. l. 6. p. 188.

Cap. 11. p. 92. vid. c. 9, 10.

Can. 7.

Adv. Cels. l. 3. p. 120.

Inter Epist. Cypr. Ep. 20. p. 32.

man, that to avoid Perſecution, had done Sacrifice, and thereby fallen from *Chriſt*, he bewails her as *dead*; tells him, that it ſtuck ſo cloſe to him, that tho' in the time of *Eaſter*, a time of Feſtivity and Rejoicing, yet he wept Night and Day, and kept Company with Sackcloth and Aſhes, and reſolved to do ſo, till by the Help of *Chriſt*, and the Prayers of good Men, ſhe ſhould by Repentance be raiſed up again. The better to prevent this Sin (wherein weaker *Chriſtians* were ſometimes enſnared in thoſe times of Cruelty and Perſecution) the Diſcipline of the ancient Church was very ſevere againſt it; of which we can have no better Evidence, than to take a little View of the Determinations relating to this Caſe of that ancient Council of *Illiberis*, held ſome Years before the time of *Conſtantine*; there we find, that if any *Chriſtian* after Baptiſm took upon him the *Flaminſhip*, or Prieſthood of the the *Gentiles*, (an Office ordinarily devolved upon the better Sort, and which *Chriſtians* ſometimes either made ſuit for, to gain more Favour with the People, or had it forced upon them by the Laws of the Country; ſo that they muſt either undergo it, or fly and forfeit their Eſtates) ſuch a one, no not at the Hour of *Death*, was to be received into the *Communion of the* Church. The Reaſon of which Severity was, becauſe whoever underwent that Office, muſt do *Sacrifice* to the Gods, and entertain the People with ſeveral kinds of Sights, Plays and Sports; which could not be managed without Murders, and the Exerciſe of all Luſt and Filthineſs, whereby they did *double* and *treble* their Sin, as that Council ſpeaks. If a *Chriſtian* in that Office did but allow the *Charges* to maintain thoſe Sports and Sights (altho' he did not *actually ſacrifice*, which he might avoid, by ſubſtituting a *Gentile* Prieſt in his room) he was indeed to be taken into *Communion* at laſt, but was to undergo a very ſevere *Penance* for

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Concil. Illiber. Can. 2. vid. Not. Albaſpin. p. 5. & de Tit. Eccle. Obſ. 22.

Vid. Can. 3. p. 8.

Part I. for it all his Life. Nay, altho' he did neither of the former, yet if he did but wear a *Crown* (a thing usually done by the Heathen Priests) he was to be excluded from Communion for *two Years* together. If a Christian went up to the *Capitol* (probably out of Curiosity) only to see the Sacrifice of the *Gentiles*, and did not see them, yet he should be as guilty as if he had seen them; his Intention and Will being the same, as the learned *Albaspine* (and I think truly) understands the *Canon*. And in such a Case, if the Person was one of the *Faithful*, he was not to be received till after *ten Years* Repentance. Every Master of a Family was commanded to suffer no *little Idols* or *Images* to be kept in his House, to be worshipped by his Children or Servants: But if this could not be done without Danger of being betrayed and accused by his Servants (a thing not unusual in those times) that then at least he himself should abstain from them, otherwise to be thrown out of the Church. Being imbrued with such *Principles*, and trained up under such a *Discipline* as this, 'tis no Wonder if they would *do* and *suffer* any thing rather than comply with the least Symptom of Idolatry. They willingly underwent Banishment and Confiscation, amongst several of which sort, *Caldonius* tells *Cyprian* of one *Bona*, who being violently drawn by her Husband to sacrifice, they by Force guiding her Hand to do it, cried out and protested against it that it was not *she* but *they* that did it, and was thereupon sent into Banishment. They freely laid down their greatest Honours and Dignities, rather than by any *idolatrous* Act to offer Violence to their Consciences; whereof *Constantius* the Father of *Constantine*, made this wise Experiment: He gave out that all the Officers and Great Men of the *Court* should either do sacrifice to the Gods, or immediately quit his Service, and

Can. 55. *p.* 69.

Can. 59. *p.* 71.

Can. 41. *p.* 57.

Ep. 18. *p.* 30.

Euseb. de Vit. Const. l. 1. *c.* 19. *p.* 117.

and the Offices and Preferments which they held under him; whereupon many turned about, while others remained firm and unshaken. Upon this the prudent and excellent Prince discovered his Plot, embraced, commended and advanced to greater Honours those who were faithful to their Religion and their Consciences; reproaching and turning off those who were so ready to acquit and forfeit them. Thus *Jovianus*, a Man of considerable Note and Quality, and an Officer of great Place in *Julian*'s Army, when the Emperor sent out his Edict, That all the Soldiers should either sacrifice or lay down their Arms, presently threw away his *Belt*, rather than he would obey that impious Command; tho' the Emperor at that time, for Reasons of State, would not suffer him to depart. And after the Death of *Julian*, when by the unanimous Vote of the whole Army he was chosen Emperor, he utterly refus'd it, till the Army had renounced their *Pagan* Idolatry and Superstition. And tho' it is true that *Life* is dearest to Men of all things in this World, yet how chearfully did they choose rather to shed their Blood, than to defile their Consciences with Idolatry; of which *Eusebius* gives us many Instances: And indeed this was the common Test in those times, Either *sacrifice* or *die*. *Phileas* Bishop of *Thumis*, in a Letter to his People, giving them an Account of the Martyrdoms that happened at *Alexandria*, tells them, that many, after having endured strange and unheard of Torments, were put to their Choice, whether they would sacrifice and be set at Liberty, or refuse and lose their Heads; whereupon all of them, without any Hesitation, readily went to embrace Death; knowing well how the Scripture is, *That whoever sacrifices unto strange Gods shall be cut off*: And again, *Thou shalt have no other Gods but me*. And in the next Chapter, *Eusebius* tells us of a whole City of

Chap. 5.

Socr. Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c. 22. p. 195.

Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 8. c. 10. p. 304.

Part I.

of Christians in *Phrygia*, which, together with all the Men, Women, and Children, was burnt to Ashes, for no other reason, but because they universally confessed themselves to be *Christians*, and refused to obey those that commanded them to worship Idols: Instances of which kind there are enow to be met with in the *Histories* of the Church.

And so fixed and unmovable were they in this, that no Promises or Hopes of Reward, no Fear or Threatning could either tempt or startle them; a memorable Passage or two that we meet withal to this Purpose: It was a Custom amongst the *Romans* to shew some Respect and Honour, not only to the *Emperors* themselves, but even to their *Statues* and *Images*, by bowing the Body, or some other Act of external Veneration. Now *Julian* the Emperor (whose great Design was to reduce all Men, but especially his Army, back to Paganism and Idolatry) made use of this crafty Project; he placed the Pictures of *Jupiter*, and other Heathen Gods, so close to his own *Statues*, that they could not bow to the one but they must also to the other: Politickly reducing them to this Strait, that either they must refuse to pay Civil Honour to their Prince (which had been a sufficient Crime against them) or seem at least to do *Honour* unto the Gods. With this Device the less *Wary* and Cautelous were intrapped; but others, that were more pious and prudent, chose rather to deny the Prince that Civil Homage, and fall into the Hands of Martyrdom, than by such an ambiguous Adoration to seem to patronize Idolatry. At another time he fell upon this Stratagem: Upon a solemn Day, when the Emperors were wont to bestow *Largesses* upon the *Soldiers*, he caused the Army to be called before him, sitting then in great Pomp and Splendor, and a large *Donative* of Gold to be laid on the one Side

Naz. Orat. Invec. 1. in Julian. Or. 13. p. 90. Vid. Sozom. Hist. Eccl. l. 5. c. 17. Naz. ib. p. 84.

Side, and an Heap of Frankincense by it on the other: Proclamation being made that they that would sacrifice the *one*, should have the *other*. By this means many of the Christian Soldiers were ensnared, performed the Sacrifice, received the Donative, and went home jolly and secure. But being at Dinner with their Companions, and drinking to each other (as the Custom was) with their Eyes lift up, and calling upon *Christ*, and making the *Sign of the Cross* as oft as they took the Cup into their Hands; one at the Table told them, he wondered how they could call upon *Christ* whom they had so lately abjured. Amazed at this, and asking how they had abjured him, they were told, that they had *sacrificed*, which was all one as to *deny Christ*. Whereupon starting up from the Table, they ran up and down the Market-Place in a furious and frantick Manner, crying out, *We are Christians, we are Christians in Heart and Truth*, and let all the World take Notice that there is but *one God*, to whom we *live*, and for whom we'll *die*. We have not broken the Faith which we swore to thee, *O Blessed Saviour*, nor renounced our Profession. If our *Hands* be guilty, our *Hearts* are innocent. 'Tis not the *Gold* has corrupted us, but the Emperor's *Craftiness* hath deceived us. And with that, running to the Emperor, they threw down their *Gold* before him, with this Address; *We have not, Sir, received a Donative, but are condemned to die. Instead of being* honoured, *we are* vilified *and* disgraced. *Take this Largess, and give it to your Soldiers; as for us, kill us, and sacrifice us to* Christ, *whom alone we own as our highest Prince. Return us* Fire *for* Fire, *and for the* Ashes *of the Sacrifice reduce us to* Ashes. *Cut off those* Hands *which we so wickedly stretched out, those* Feet *that carried us to so great a Mischief. Give others the* Gold, *who may have no Cause to repent on't; for our part,* Christ *is enough*

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Part I. *for us, whom we value instead of all Things.* With this noble and generous Resolution, tho' the Emperor was highly inraged; yet because he envied them the Honour of *Martyrdom*, he would not put them to Death, but banished them, and inflicted other Penalties which might sufficiently evidence his Rage against them.

Nay, with so warm a Zeal were they acted against Idolatry, that many of them could not contain themselves from falling foul upon it, whereever they met it, tho' with the immediate Hazard of their Lives, So *Romanus* (Deacon and Exorcist of the Church of *Cæsarea*) seeing great Multitudes of People at *Antioch* flocking to the Temples, and doing Sacrifice to the Gods, came to them, and began very severely to reprove and reproach them; for which being apprehended, after many strange and cruel Usages he was put to Death with all imaginable Pain and Torture. Thus *Apphianus* (a young Man) when the Criers by Proclamation summoned all the Inhabitants of *Cæsarea* to sacrifice to the Gods; the *Tribunes* particularly reciting every Man's Name out of a Book, to the great Terror of all that were Christians; privately and unknown to us (says *Eusebius*, who lived at that time in the same House with him) stole out, and getting near *Urbanus* the *President* (who was then compassed about with a *Guard* of Soldiers) just as he was about to offer Sacrifice, caught hold of his Right Hand, which he grasped so fast, that he forced him to let fall the Sacrifice, gravely admonishing him to desist from such Errors and Vanities: *Clearly shewing*, says the *Historian*, *that true* Christians *are so far from being drawn from the Worship of the True God, that by Threatnings and Torments they are rather heightened into a greater and more ingenuous Freedom and Boldness in the Profession of the Truth.* For this Fact the young Man was al-

Euseb. de Mart. Pac. c. 2. p. 320.

Ib. c. 4. p. 324.

most

most torne in Pieces by the Soldiers, whose Rage and Fierceness could scarce suffer him to be reprieved for acuter Tortures, which were exercised towards him with all possible Cruelty; and when all could do no good upon him, he was thrown half dead into the Sea. The like we read of Three famous *Christians* at *Merum*, a City in *Phrygia*; where, when the Governor of the *Province* under *Julian* the *Apostate*, had commanded the Heathen Temple to be opened, they got by Night into the Temple, and broke to pieces all the *Statues* and *Images* of the Gods. Whereupon when a general Persecution was like to rise against all the *Christians* of the City, that the *Ignorant* and *Innocent* might not suffer, the Authors of the Fact came of their own Accord to the Judge, and confessed it; who offered them Pardon if they would sacrifice, which they rejected with Disdain, and told him they were much readier to endure any Torments, and Death itself, than to be defiled with sacrificing: And accordingly were first treated with all sorts of Torments, and then burnt upon an *Iron Grate*, retaining their Courage to the last, and took their Leave of the Governor with this *Sarcasm*; *If thou hast a Mind*, Amachius, *to eat roast Meat, turn us on the other side, lest we be but half roasted, and so prove ungrateful to thy Taste.* So mightily did a restless Passion for the Divine Honour possess the Minds of those Primitive Christians; and tho' it is true, such Transports of Zeal are not ordinarily warrantable (for which Reason the Council of *Illiberis* justly prohibited those who were killed in the defacing and demolishing Idols, to be reckoned in the Number of *Martyrs*) yet do they sufficiently shew what a Spirit of Eagerness and Activity ruled in those Times against the false Religions of the World.

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Socr. Hist. Ecc. l. 3. c. 15. p. 186.

By all this we may see how unjustly the Christians were traduced and accused for *Idolaters*. Three

Part I. things were commonly charged upon them; that they worshipped the *Sun*, the *Cross*, and an *Ass's Head*. For the first, their Worshipping the *Sun*, *Apol. c. 16. p. 16.* *Tertullian* answers, That the Mistake arose from a double Cause, partly that the *Christians* of those times did generally pray towards the *East* and the *Sun-rising*, which the Heathens themselves also did, tho' upon different Grounds: And partly because they performed the Solemnities of their Religion upon the *Day* that was dedicated to the *Sun*, which made the *Gentiles* suspect that they worshipped the *Sun* itself. They were next charged with worshipping *Crosses*, a Charge directly *Min. Fel. p. 24.* false. As for Crosses (says *Octavius*) we neither *desire* nor *worship them*; 'tis you who consecrate wooden Gods, that perhaps adore wooden Crosses as Parts of them: For what else are your *Ensigns*, *Banners* and *Colours*, with which you go out to War, but *Golden* and *Painted Crosses?* The very *Trophies* of your Victory do not only resemble the Fashion of a simple Cross, but of a Man that is fastened to *Loc. supra citat.* it. The very same Answer which *Tertullian* also returns to this Charge. The Occasion of it no doubt was the Christians talking of, and magnifying so much their *crucified* Master, and their almost constant Use of the *Sign of the Cross*, which (as we shall see afterwards) they made use of even in the most common Actions of their Lives. But for paying any Adoration to a *material* Cross, was a thing to which those times were the greatest Strangers. Otherwise understanding the Cross for him that hung upon it, they were not ashamed (with the Great Apostle) *to glory in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and to count it the matter of their highest Joy and Triumph. But the absurdest Part of the Charge was, that they worshipped the *Head of* *Pag. 8* *an Ass*. I hear (says the Heathen in *Minutius Felix*) that being seduced by I know not what fond Persuasion,

ſuaſion, they worſhip the *conſecrated Head of an Aſs*, one of the filthieſt Creatures; a Religion fitly calculated for Perſons of ſuch a *dull* and *ſtupid* Diſpoſition. Hence *Tertullian* tells us, that *Chriſtians* were called *Aſinarii*, Aſs-Worſhippers, and that *Chriſt* was painted and publickly expoſed by the bold wicked Hand of an Apoſtate *Jew*, with *Aſs's Ears*, one of his *Feet hoofed*, holding a *Book* in his Hand, and having a *Gown* over him, with this Inſcription: Chap. 5. *Ibid. Vid. ad Natio. l. 1. c. 14. p. 50.*

DEUS CHRISTIANORUM ONONYCHITES;

The Aſs-hoofed God of the Chriſtians.

Ononychites.] *De variis hujus vocis lectionibus vid. Rigalt. in loc. & Voſſ. de Idol. l. 3. c. 75. p. 565. Pag. 23.*

A moſt ridiculous Repreſentation, and the Iſſue of the moſt fooliſh Spite and Malice. *When I ſaw it* (ſays he) *I laughed at both the Title and the Faſhion.* This, *Octavius* tells his Adverſary, was the Reſult and Spawn of lying Fame, begot and nouriſhed by the Father of Lyes: For who, ſays he, can be ſo ſilly as to worſhip this? or who can be ſo much more ſilly, as to believe it ſhould be worſhipped? unleſs it be that you yourſelves do conſecrate whole Aſſes in the Stable with your Goddeſs *Epona*, and religiouſly adorn them in the Solemnities of *Iſis*, and both ſacrifice and adore the Heads of Rams and Oxen, and make Gods of a Mixture of a *Goat* and a *Man*, and dedicate them with the Faces of *Dogs* and *Lions*. More he has there to the ſame Purpoſe, as *Tertullian* alſo had anſwered the ſame thing before him. The true Ground of this ridiculous Charge (as *Tertullian* obſerves) was a fabulous Report that had been a long time common amongſt the Heathens, That the *Jews*, when wandering in the Wilderneſs, and almoſt ready to die of Thirſt, were conducted by wild Aſſes to a Fountain of Water; for which great Kindneſs they formed the Shape of an Aſs, and ever after *Vid. etiam ad Nation. l. 1. c. 11. p. 49.*

Part. I.

worshipped it with Divine Honours. This is confidently reported both by *Tacitus* and *Plutarch*, as it had been many Years before by *Apio* the *Alexandrian*, in his Books against the *Jews*. And by this means the Heathens, who did frequently confound the *Jews* and *Christians*, came to form and fasten this Charge upon them, when it was equally false in respect of both. For as *Tertullian* observes, the same *Tacitus*, who reports this, tells us in another Place, that when *Pompey*, at the taking of *Jerusalem*, presumptuously broke into the *Holy of Holies* (whither none but the *High Priest* might enter) out of a Curiosity to pry into the most hidden Secrets and *Arcana* of their Religion, he found no Image at all there; whereas (says *Tertullian*) had they worshipped any such thing, there had been no likelier Place to have met with it; and therefore brands him with the Charge of *the most lying Historian in the World.* And thus we see how the ancient *Christians* manifested and maintained their Love and Piety towards God by a most vigorous and hearty Opposition of that Idolatry, that reigned so uncontrolably in the Heathen World.

Tacit. Hist. l. 5. c. 4. Plut. Sympos. l. 4. Quæst. 5. p. 670. Apol. c. 16.

CHAP. VI.

Of Churches and Places of Publick Worship in the Primitive Times.

Place, a Circumstance necessary to every Action. The Piety of Christians in founding Places for the Solemnities of Religion. They had distinct and separate Places for their Publick Assemblies, even in the Apostles times. This proved out of the New Testament, as also in the succeeding Ages, from the Testimonies of the Fathers

thers and Heathen Writers. The common Objection of the Gentiles, that Christians had no Temples, considered and answered. Churches increased as Christianity met with favourable Entertainment: Restored and Repaired by Diocletian, Maximinus, Constantine. The Fashion of their Churches oblong, built towards the East. The Form of their Churches described. The Vestibulum, or Porch. The Narthex, and what in it. The Nave or Body of the Church. The Ambo, or Reading-Pew. The Station of the Faithful. The ἱερατεῖον, or Chancel. The Altarium, or Lord's Table. The Bishops Throne, and Seats of the Presbyters. The Diaconian what. The Prothesis. Christians then beautified their Churches. Whether they had Altars in them. Decent Tables for the Celebration of the Divine Offices. Those frequently by the Fathers styled Altars, and in what Sense. They had no such gaudy Altars as the Heathens had in their Temples, and the Papists now in their Churches. Altars when begun to be fixed and made of Stone. Made Asylums and Places of Refuge, and invested with many Privileges by Christian Emperors. No Images in their Churches for above four hundred Years, proved out of the Fathers. Pictures in Churches condemned by the Council of Illiberis. An Account of Epiphanius's tearing the Picture of Christ in the Church of Anablatha; and the great Force of the Argument thence against Image-worship. Christian Churches when first

Chap. 6.

Part I.

formerly conſecrated. The Encœnia *of the ancient Church. Our Wakes or Feaſts in memory of the Dedication of particular Churches. What Incomes or Revenues they had in the firſt Ages. Particular Churches had ſome ſtanding Revenues, even under the Heathen Emperors. Theſe much increaſed by the Piety of* Conſtantine *and the firſt Chriſtian Princes; their Laws noted to that Purpoſe. Their Reverence ſhewed at their going into Churches, and during their Stay there, even by the Emperors themſelves.*

THE Primitive *Chriſtians* were not more heartily zealous againſt the idolatrous Worſhip of the Heathen Gods, than they were religiouſly obſervant of whatever concerned the Honour and Worſhip of the true, as to all the material Parts and Circumſtances of it; as will eaſily appear, if we conſider what Care they had about the *Place*, *Time*, *Perſons*, and both the *Matter* and the *Manner* of that Worſhip that they performed to God. Under each of which we ſhall take Notice of what is moſt conſiderable, and does moſt properly relate to it, ſo far as the Records of thoſe times give us an Account of it.

Place is an unſeparable Circumſtance of religious Worſhip; for every Body, by the natural Neceſſity of its Being, requires ſome determinate Place either for Reſt or Motion. Now the Worſhip of God being in a great part an external Action, eſpecially when performed by the joint Concurrence of ſeveral Perſons, does not only neceſſarily require a *Place*, but a Place *conveniently capacious* of all that join together in the ſame publick Actions of Religion. This Reaſon put all Nations, even by the Light of

of Nature, upon erecting *publick Places* for the Honour of their Gods, and for their own Conveniency in meeting together to pay their religious Services and Devotions. But my present Enquiry reaches no farther than the *Primitive Christians*, not whether they met together for the Discharge of their common Duties, (which I suppose none can doubt of) but whether they had *Churches* fix'd, and appropriate Places for the joint Performance of their Publick Offices. And that they had, even in those early Times, will, I think, be beyond all Dispute, if we take but a short Survey of those first Ages of *Christianity*. In the Sacred Story, we find some more than probable Footsteps of some determinate Places for their solemn Conventions, and peculiar only to that Use. Of this nature was that ὑπερῶον, or *Upper Room* into which the *Apostles* and Disciples (after the Return from the Ascension of our Saviour) went up, as into a a Place commonly known and separate to that use, there by Fasting and Prayer to make Choice of a new Apostle; and this supposed by a very ancient Tradition to have been the *same Room* wherein our Saviour, the Night before his Death, celebrated the Passover with his Disciples, and instituted the *Lord's Supper*. Such a one, if not (which I rather think) the same, was that *one Place*, wherein they were all assembled with one Accord upon the Day of *Pentecost*, when the Holy Ghost visibly came down upon them. And this the rather, because the Multitude (and they too, *Strangers of every Nation under Heaven*) came so readily to the Place upon the first Rumour of so strange an Accident; which could heardly have been, had it not been commonly known to be the Place where the *Christians* used to meet together. And this, very Learned Men take to be the Meaning of that, *Acts* 2. 46. *They continued daily with one Accord in the Temple,*

Chap. 6.

Acts 1. 13.

Acts 2. 1.

Part I. *Temple, and breaking Bread,* κατ' οἶκον, not as we render it, *from House to House, but at Home,* as 'tis in the *Margin,* or *in the House; they eat their Meat with gladness and singleness of Heart, i. e.* when they had perform'd their daily Devotions at the *Temple,* at the accustom'd Hours of Prayer, they used to return home to this *Upper Room,* there to celebrate the Holy *Eucharist,* and then go to their ordinary Meals. This seems to be a clear and unforced Interpretation, and to me the more probable, because it immediately follows upon their assembling together in that one Place at the Day of *Pentecost*; which Room is also called by the same Name of *House,* at the 2*d Verse* of that *Chapter.* And 'tis no ways unlikely (as Mr. *Mede* conjectures) but that when the first Believers *sold their Houses and Lands, and laid their Money at the Apostles Feet,* to supply the Necessities of the Church, some of them might give their Houses (at least some eminent Room in them) for the Church to meet, and perform their sacred Duties. Which also may be the Reason why the Apostle, writing to the particular *Christians,* speaks so often of the *Church that was in their House:* Which seems clearly to intimate, not so much the particular Persons of any private Family, living together under the same Band of *Christian* Discipline, as that in such and such a House (and more especially in this or that Room of it) there was the constant and solemn Convention of the *Christians* of that Place, for their joint Celebration of Divine Worship. And this will be further clear'd by that famous Passage of S. *Paul,* where, taxing the *Corinthians* for their Irreverence and Abuse of the *Lord's Supper,* one greedily eating before another, and some of them to great Excess; *What* (says he) *have you not Houses to eat and drink in? or despise ye the Church of God?* Where, that by *Church* is not meant the *Assembly*

1 Cor. 11. 22.

meeting,

meeting, but the *Place* in which they uſed to aſ- Chap. 6.
ſemble, is evident, partly from what went before; for *their coming together in the Church, verſe* 18. is expounded by *their coming together into one Place, verſe* 20. plainly arguing, that the Apoſtle meant not the Perſons, but the Place; partly from the Oppoſition which he makes between the Church and their own private Houſes. If they muſt have ſuch irregular Banquets, they had Houſes of their own, where 'twas much fitter to do it, and to have their ordinary Repaſt, than in that *Place* which was ſet apart for the common Exerciſes of Religion, and therefore ought not to be diſhonour'd by ſuch extravagant and intemperate Feaſtings; for which cauſe he enjoins them, in the *Cloſe* of that *Chapter, that if any Man hunger, he ſhould eat at Home.* And that this Place was always thus underſtood by the Fathers of old, were no hard matter to make out; as alſo by moſt Learned Men of later times; of which it ſhall ſuffice to intimate two of our own, Men of great Name and Learning, who have done it to great ſatisfaction. *Nic. Full. Miſcell. S. l. 2. c. 9. M. Mede. p.* 405.

Thus ſtood the Caſe during the *Apoſtles* Times; for the Ages after them, we find that the *Chriſtians* had their fix'd and definite Places of Worſhip, eſpecially in the ſecond *Century*; as, had we no other Evidence, might be made good from the Teſtimony of the Author of that *Dialogue* in *Lucian,* (if not *Lucian* himſelf, of which I ſee no great cauſe to doubt) who lived under the Reign of *Trajan,* and who expreſly mentions that *Houſe* or *Room* wherein the *Chriſtians* were wont to aſſemble together. *Philopatr. tom.* 2. *p.* 1007. And *Clemens* (in his famous Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*) aſſures us, That *Chriſt* did not only appoint the Times *when,* the Perſons by *whom,* but the Places *where* he would be ſolemnly ſerved and worſhipped. *Pag.* 52. And *Juſtin Martyr* expreſly affirms, That upon *Sunday* all *Chriſtians* (whether in *Ap.* 2. *p.* 98.

Town

Part I. Town or Country) uſed to aſſemble together in *one Place*; which could hardly be done, had not that Place been fixed and ſettled. The ſame we find afterwards in ſeveral Places of *Tertullian*, who ſpeaks of their coming into the Church and the Houſe of God, which he elſewhere calls the *Houſe of our Dove, i. e.* our Innocent and Dove-like Religion; and there deſcribes the very Form and Faſhion of it. And in another Place, ſpeaking of their going into the Water to be baptized, he tells us, They were wont firſt to go into the Church to make their ſolemn Renunciation before the Biſhop. About this time, in the Reign of *Alexander Severus*, the Emperor, (who began his Reign about the Year 222.) the Heathen Hiſtorian tells us, That when there was a Conteſt between the *Chriſtians* and the *Vintners*, about a certain publick Place which the Chriſtians had ſeized and challenged for theirs; the Emperor gave the Cauſe for the *Chriſtians* againſt the *Vintners*, ſaying, *'Twas much better that God ſhould be worſhipped there any ways, than that the* Vintners *ſhould poſſeſs it.* If it ſhall be ſaid, that the Heathens of thoſe Times generally accuſed the Chriſtians for having no Temples, and charged it upon them as a piece of *Atheiſm* and *Impiety*; and that the Chriſtian *Apologiſts* did not deny it; as will appear to any that will take the Pains to examine the Places alledged in the Margin: To this the Anſwer in ſhort depends upon the *Notion* which they had of a *Temple*, by which the Gentiles underſtood the Places devoted to their Gods, and wherein their Deities were incloſed and ſhut up; Places adorned with Statues and Images, with fine Altars and Ornaments. And for ſuch Temples as theſe, they freely confeſſed they had none, no nor ought to have; for that the true God did not (as the Heathens ſuppoſed theirs) *dwell in Temples made with Hands*, nor either

De Idolol. c. 7. p. 88. Adv. Valentin. c. 3. p. 251.

De Corona Mil. c. 3. p. 101.

Lamprid. invit. Alex. Sever. c. 49. p. 575.

Min. Fel. p. 8. to 26. Arnob. adv. Gent. l. 6. p. 83. Lact. de Orig. error. l. 2. c. 2. p. 141.

ther needed nor could possibly be honoured by them: And therefore they purposely abstained from the Word *Temple*, and I do not remember that 'tis used by any Christian Writer for the Place of the Christians Assemblies, for the best Part of the first three hundred Years. And yet those very Writers who deny *Christians* to have had any Temples, do at the same time acknowledge that they had their Meeting-places for Divine Worship, their *Conventicula*, as *Arnobius* calls them, and complains they were furiously demolish'd by their Enemies. If any desire to know more concerning this, as also that *Christians* had appropriate Places of Worship for the greatest part of the three first Centuries, let them read a Discourse purposely written upon this Subject by *a most learned Man of* our own Nation: Nor indeed should I have said so much as I have about it, but that I had noted most of these things before I read his Discourse upon that Subject. Chap. 6. *Lib.* 4. *p.* 67. *Mr.* Jos. Mede's *Discourse concerning Churches, Op. part* 1. *l.* 2.

Afterwards their Churches began to rise apace, according as they met with more quiet and favourable times; especially under *Valerian*, *Gallienus*, *Claudius*, *Aurelian*, and some other Emperors: Of which Times *Eusebius* tells us, That the *Bishops* met with the highest Respect and Kindness, both from People and Governors. And adds, But who shall be able to reckon up the innumerable Multitudes that daily flock'd to the Faith of *Christ*, the Number of Congregations in every *City*, those famous Meetings of theirs in their *Oratories* or sacred Places; so great, that not being content with those old Buildings which they had before, they erected from the very Foundations more fair and spacious Churches in every City? This was several Years before the times of *Constantine*, and yet even they had their Churches of *ancient Date*. This indeed was a very serene and Sun-shiny Season, but alas! *Hist. Eccl. l.* 8. *c.* 1. *p.* 292.

it

Part I. it began to darken again, and *the Clouds returned after the Rain:* For in the very next Chapter he tells us, That in the Reign of *Diocleſian* there came out Imperial Edicts, commanding all *Chriſtians* to be perſecuted, the Biſhops to be impriſon'd, the Holy Bible to be burnt, and their Churches to be demoliſh'd and laid level with the Ground; which how many they were, may be gueſſed at by this, That (as *Optatus* tells us) there were about this time above forty *Baſilicæ* or Churches in *Rome* only. Upon *Conſtantine*'s coming into a Partnerſhip of the Empire, the Clouds began to diſperſe and ſcatter; and *Maximinus* (who then govern'd the *Eaſtern* Parts of the Empire) a bitter Enemy to *Chriſtians*, was yet forced by a publick Edict to give *Chriſtians* the free Liberty of their Religion, and leave to repair and rebuild τὰ κυριακὰ τὰ ὀικεῖα, their *Churches*; which ſhortly after they every where ſet upon, raiſing their Churches from the Ground to a vaſt Height, and to a far greater Splendor and Glory than thoſe which they had before; the Emperors giving all poſſible Encouragement to it by frequent Laws and Conſtitutions; the Chriſtians alſo themſelves contributing towards it with the greateſt Chearfulneſs and Liberality, even to a Magnificence comparable to that of the *Jewiſh* Princes towards the Building of *Solomon's Temple*; as *Euſebius* tells them, in his *Oration* at the Dedication of of the famous Church at *Tyre*. And no ſooner was the whole Empire devolved upon *Conſtantine*, but he publiſh'd two Laws; one to prohibit *Pagan Worſhip*, the other commanding *Churches* to be built of a nobler Size and Capacity than before: To which purpoſe he directed his Letters to *Euſebius*, and the reſt of the Biſhops to ſee it done within their ſeveral Juriſdictions; charging alſo the Governors of the Provinces to be aſſiſting to them, and to furniſh them with whatever was neceſſary and con-

De Schiſm. Donat. l. 2. p. 40.

Euſeb. l. 9. c. 10. p. 364.

Id. l. 10. c. 2. p. 370.

Ib. c. 4. p. 377.

De vita Conſtant. l 2. c. 45, 46. p. 464.

convenient: Insomuch that in a short time the World was beautify'd with Churches and sacred Oratories, both in Cities and Villages, and in the most barbarous and desart Places; called Κυριακὰ, says the *Historian*, (from whence our *Kirk* and *Church*) the *Lord's Houses*, because erected not to Men, but to the Honour of our *Lord* and *Saviour*. 'Twere needless to insist any longer upon the Piety of Christians in building Churches in and after the time of *Constantine*, the Instances being so vastly numerous; only I cannot omit what *Nazianzen* reports of his own Father, who (tho' Bishop of a very small and inconsiderable Diocese, yet) built a famous Church almost wholly at his own Charge. Chap. 6. *Orat. de laud. Constant. c. 7. p. 660.* *Or. funeb. in laud. Patr. Or. 19. p. 313.*

Thus we have seen, That from the very Infancy of the Gospel, the Christians always had their settled and determinate Places of Divine Worship. For the Form and Fashion of their Churches, it was for the most part *oblong*, to keep (say some) the better Correspondence with the Fashion of a *Ship*, the common Notion and Metaphor by which the Church was wont to be represented, and to put us in mind that we are tossed up and down in the World as upon a stormy and tempestuous *Sea*, and that out of the Church there's no safe Passage to Heaven, the Couhtry we all hope to arrive at. They were generally built *towards the East*, (towards which also they performed the most solemn Parts of their Worship, the Reasons whereof we shall see afterwards in its due Place) following herein the Custom of the Gentiles, tho' upon far other Grounds than they did; and this seems to have obtain'd from the first Ages of *Christianity*; sure I am, 'twas so in *Tertullian's* time, who opposing the plain and simple Way of the *Orthodox* Assemblies, to the *skulking and clancular* Conventicles of the Hereticks, who, *Serpent-like*, crept about in Holes and Corners; says he, *The House* *Constit. Apost. l. 2. c. 57. p. 875.* *Adv. Valentin. p. 251.*

of

Part I. *of our Dove-like Religion is ſimple, built on high and in an open View, and reſpects the Light as the Figure of the Holy Spirit, and the Eaſt as the Repreſentation of Chriſt.* It cannot be thought that in the firſt Ages, while the Flames of Perſecution raged about their Ears, the *Chriſtian* Churches ſhould be very ſtately and magnificent, but ſuch as the Condition of thoſe Times would bear; their Splendor increaſing according to the Entertainment that *Chriſtianity* met withal in the World; till the Empire becoming Chriſtians, their Temples roſe up into *Grandeur* and *Gallantry*; as amongſt others, may appear by the particular Deſcription which *Euſebius* makes of the *Church* of *Tyre*, mention'd before; and that which *Conſtantine* built at *Conſtantinople*, in honour of the Apoſtles; both which were incomparably ſumptuous and magnificent.

De vita Conſt. l. 4. c. 58, 59. p. 555.

I ſhall not undertake to deſcribe at large the exact Form, and the ſeveral Parts and Dimenſions of their Churches, (which varied ſomewhat according to different Times and Ages) but briefly reflect upon ſuch as were moſt common and remarkable. At the Entrance of their Churches (eſpecially after they began to arrive at more Perfection) was the *Veſtibulum* (called alſo *Atrium* and *περιδρομον*) the *Porch*, in greater Churches of ſomewhat larger Capacity, adorned many times with Cloiſters, Marble-Columns, Fountains, and Ciſterns of Waters, and covered over for the Conveniency of thoſe that ſtood or walked there. Here ſtood the loweſt Order of *Penitents*, begging the Prayers of the Faithful as they went in. For the Church itſelf, it uſually conſiſted of three Parts: The Firſt was the *Narthex* (which we have no proper Word to render by) it was that Part of the Church that lay next to the great Door by which they entred in; in the firſt Part of it ſtood the *Catechumens*, or firſt Learners of Chriſtianity; in the Middle the

Euergu-

Energumeni, or those who were *possessed by Satan*; and in this Part also stood the *Font* or Place of *Baptismal* Initiation; and towards the upper End was the Place of the Hearers, who were one of the Ranks of *Penitents*. The second Part contain'd the middle or main Body of the Church, (called by the *Greeks* Νάος, by the *Latins Navis*, from whence our Term the *Nave* of the Church, comes) where the *Faithful* assembled for the Celebration of Divine Service; where the Men and the Women had their distinct *Apartments*, left at such times unchaste and irregular Appetites should be kindled by a promiscuous interfering with one another: Of which pious and excellent Contrivance, mention is made in an ancient Funeral *Inscription* found in the *Vatican Cœmetery* at *Rome*; such a one bury'd *SINISTRA PARTE VIRORUM*, on that *Side* of the Church where the *Men sat*. In this Part of the Church, next to the entring into it, stood the Class of the *Penitents*, who were called ὑποπίπτοντες, because at their going out they fell down upon their Knees before the Bishop, who laid his Hands upon them. Next to them was the *Ambo*, the *Pulpit*, or rather *Reading-Desk*, whence the Scriptures were read and preached to the People. Above that were the Faithful, the highest Rank and Order of the People, and who alone communicated at the Lord's Table. The third Part was the βῆμα or ἱερατεῖον, separated from the rest of the Church by neat *Rails*, called *Cancelli*, whence our *English* Word *Chancel*, to denote that Part of the Church to this day: Into this Part none might come, but such as were in Holy *Orders*, unless it were the *Greek Emperors* at *Constantinople*, who were allow'd to come up to the Table to make their *Offerings*, and so back again. Within this Division the most considerable thing was the Θυσιαστήριον, the *Altar*, (as they metaphorically called it, because there

Chap. 6.

Const. Apost. l. 2. c. 57. p. 875.

Roma subterran. l. 2. c. 10. num. 23. p. 204.

Part. I. they offer'd the *Commemorative Sacrifice* of Christ's Body and Blood) or the *Communion-Table* (ἡ Ἁγία τράπεζα, as 'tis frequently ſtyled by the *Greek* Fathers) behind which, at the very upper end of the Chancel, was the *Chair* or *Throne* of the Biſhop (for ſo was it almoſt conſtantly called) on both ſides whereof were the σύνθρονοι, the *Seats* of the *Presbyters* (for the *Deacons* might not here ſit down.) The Biſhop's Throne was raiſed up ſomewhat higher from the Ground, and from thence I ſuppoſe it was, that he uſually deliver'd his Sermons to the People. Therefore *Socrates* ſeems to note it as a new Thing in *Chryſoſtom*, that when he preached he went to ſit ἐπὶ τῦ ἄμβωνος, *upon the Pulpit* (he means that in the Body of the Church, for ſo *Sozomen* tells us that he ſat in the *Reading-Desk* in the Middle of the Church) that by reaſon of his low Voice he might be better heard of the People. Adjoining to the Chancel on the *North ſide*, probably, was the *Diaconicon*, mention'd both in the *Laodicean Council* (tho' I know both *Zonaras* and *Balſamon*, and after them the learned *Leo Allatius*, will have another thing to be meant in that Place) as alſo in a Law of *Arcadius* and *Honorius* againſt *Hereticks*, and probably ſo called either becauſe peculiarly committed to the *Deacon* of the Place, or (as the great Commentator upon that Law will have it) becauſe ſet apart ἡ ἱερὰ διακονία, to ſome Sacred Services. It was in the Nature of our modern *Veſtries*, the *Sacriſty*, wherein the Plate, Veſſels and Veſtments belonging to the Church, and other Things dedicated to Holy Uſes, were laid up, and where (in after times) *Reliques* and ſuch like Fopperies were treaſured up with great Care and Diligence. On the other ſide of the Chancel was the *Prothefis* or Place where things were prepared in order to the Sacrament, where the Offerings were laid, and what remain'd of the Sacramental Elements,

Hiſt. Eccl. l. 6. c. 5. p. 334.
Lib. 8. c. 5. p. 764.
Can. 21. De Templ. Græc. num. 14. p. 25.
C. Th. l. 16. tit. 5. l. 29. ubi vid. Jac. Gothofr. Com.

ments, till they were *decently* disposed of. And this may serve for a short View of the Churches of those first Times, after they began to grow up into some Beauty and Perfection. Chap. 6.

But tho' the Christians of those Times spared no convenient *Cost* in founding and adorning Publick Places for the Worship of God, yet were they careful to keep a decent Mien between a sordid *Slovenliness*, and a too curious and over-nice *Superstition*. In the more early Times, even while the Fury and Fierceness of their Enemies kept them low and mean, yet they beautify'd their Oratories and Places of Worship; especially if we may believe the *Author of the* Dialogue in *Lucian* (whom we mentioned before, and who lived within the first Age) who bringing in one *Critias*, that was persuaded by the Christians to go to the Place of their Assembly, (which by his Description seems to have been an ὑπερῷον, or *Upper Room*) tells us, that after they had gone up several Stairs, they came at last into an *House or Room that was overlaid with Gold*, where he beheld nothing but a Company of Persons with their Bodies bowed down, and pale Faces. I know the Design of that Dialogue in part is to abuse and deride the Christians, but there's no Reason to suppose he feign'd those Circumstances which made nothing to his purpose. As the Times grew better, they added more and greater Ornaments to them; concerning two whereof there has been some Contest in the Christian World, *Altars* and *Images*. As for *Altars*, the first Christians had no other in their Churches than *decent Tables* of Wood, upon which they celebrated the Holy *Eucharist*: These, 'tis true, in Allusion to those in the *Jewish* Temple, the Fathers generally called *Altars*; and truly enough might do so, by reason of those Sacrifices they offer'd upon them, *viz.* the Commemoration of *Christ's Sacrifice* in the Blessed Sacrament, the Sacri-

Part. I.

fice of *Prayer and Thankſgiving*, and the Oblation of *Alms and Charity* for the Poor (uſually laid upon thoſe Tables) which the Apoſtle expreſly ſtyles *a Sacrifice*. Theſe were the only *Sacrifices* (for no other had the Chriſtian World for many hundreds of Years) which they then offer'd upon their *Altars*, which were much of the ſame kind with our *Communion Tables* at this day. For that they had not any ſuch *fix'd and gaudy* Altars (as the *Heathens* then had in their *Temples*, and *Papiſts* ſtill have in their *Churches*) is moſt evident, becauſe the Heathens at every turn did charge and reproach them for having none, and the Fathers in their Anſwers did freely and openly acknowledge and avow it; aſſerting and pleading that the only true *Sacred Altar* was a *pure* and *holy Mind*, and that the beſt and moſt *acceptable* Sacrifice to God was a *pious Heart*, and an *innocent and religious Life*. *Hæc noſtra ſacrificia, hæc Dei ſacra ſunt: Theſe* (ſay they) *are our Oblations, theſe the Sacrifices we owe to God.* This was the State of *Altars* in the Chriſtian Churches for near upon the firſt three hundred Years; till *Conſtantine* coming in, and with him Peace and Plenty, the Churches began to excel in Coſtlineſs and Bravery every day, and then the wooden and movable Altars began to be turn'd into fix'd Altars of *Stone* or *Marble*, tho' uſed to no other purpoſe than before: And yet this too did not ſo univerſally obtain (though ſeverely urged by *Sylveſter* Biſhop of *Rome*) but that in very many places Tables or movable Altars of Wood continued in uſe a long time after, as might eaſily been made appear from ſeveral Paſſages in *Athanaſius* and others, yea, even to S. *Auguſtine*'s time, and probably much later, were it proper to my Buſineſs to ſearch after it. No ſooner were Altars made fix'd and immovable, but they were compaſſed in with *Rails* to fence off Rudeneſs and Irreverence, and Perſons began to regard them

Vide Clem. Alex. ſtromat. l. 7. p. 117. Orig. adv. Celſ. l. 4. p. 383. Min. Fel. p. 8.---26. Arnob. adv. gent. l. 6. p. 83. Lact. l. 2. c. 2.

Athan. ad Orthodox. p. 728. to. 1. & ep. ad ſolit. vit. agent.

them with mighty Obſervance and Reſpect; which ſoon grew ſo high, that they became *Aſylums* and Refuges to protect innocent Perſons and unwitting Offenders from immediate Violence and Oppreſſion; an Inſtance whereof *Nazianzen* gives us in a Chriſtian Widow, a Woman of great Place and Quality, who flying from the Importunities of the Preſident, who would have forced her to marry him, had no other way but to take Sanctuary at the Holy Table in S. *Baſil*'s Church at *Cæſarea*. She was demanded with many fierce and terrible Threatnings, but the Holy Man ſtoutly refuſed, altho' the Preſident was his mortal Enemy, and ſought only a Pretence to ruin him. Many ſuch Caſes may be met with in the Hiſtory of the Church. Nor was this a Privilege merely founded upon Cuſtom, but ſettled and ratify'd by the Laws of *Chriſtian Emperors*; concerning the particular Caſes whereof, together with the Extent and Limitation of theſe *Immunities*, there are no leſs than ſix ſeveral Laws of the Emperors *Theodoſius*, *Arcadius*, and *Theodoſius junior*, yet extant in the *Theodoſian Code*. But how far thoſe *Aſyla's* and *Sanctuaries* were good and uſeful, and to what Evil and pernicious Purpoſes they were improved in After-times, is without the Limits of my preſent Task to enquire.

Chap. 6.

Aug. quæſt. V. & N. T. quæſt. 101. & alibi ſæpe. Orat. 20. in laud. Baſil. p. 353.

Lib. 9. tit. 45. de his qui ad Eccleſias confugiunt.

But if in thoſe Times there was ſo little Ground for Altars (as uſed in the preſent Senſe of the *Church* of *Rome*) there was yet far leſs for *Images*; and certainly might things be carry'd by a fair and impartial Trial of Antiquity, the Diſpute would ſoon be at an end; there not being any one juſt and good Authority to prove, that *Images* were either *worſhipped* or *uſed* in Churches, for near upon four hundred Years after *Chriſt*; and I doubt not but it might be carry'd much farther, but that my Buſineſs lies mainly within thoſe firſt

Part I. Ages of Chriſtianity. Nothing can be more clear, than that the Chriſtians were frequently challenged by the Heathens, as for having no *Altars* and *Temples*, ſo that they had no *Images* or *Statues* in them, and that the Chriſtian *Apologiſts* never deny'd it, but induſtriouſly defended themſelves againſt the Charge, and rejected the very Thoughts of any ſuch thing with Contempt and Scorn; as might be abundantly made good from *Tertullian*, *Clem. Alexandrinus*, *Origen*, *Minutius Felix*, *Arnobius*, and *Lactantius*, many of whoſe Teſtimonies have been formerly pointed to. Amongſt other things *Origen* plainly tells his Adverſary (who had objected this to the Chriſtians) that the Images that were to be dedicated to God were not to be carved by the Hand of *Artiſts*, but to be form'd and faſhion'd in us by the *Word of God*, *viz.* the *Vertues* of Juſtice and Temperance, of Wiſdom and Piety, &c. that conform us to the Image of his only Son. *Theſe* (ſays he) *are the only Statues form'd in our Minds, and by which alone we are perſuaded 'tis fit to do Honour to him who is the Image of the inviſible God, the Prototype and Archetypal Pattern of all ſuch Images.* Had Chriſtians then given Adoration to them, or but ſet them up in their Places of Worſhip, with what Face can we ſuppoſe they ſhould have told the World, that they ſo much ſlighted and abhorr'd them; and indeed what a hearty Deteſtation they univerſally ſhew'd to any thing that had but the leaſt Shadow of Idolatry, has been before proved at large. The Council of *Illiberis*, that was held in *Spain* ſome time before *Conſtantine*, expreſly provided againſt it, decreeing, that *no Pictures ought to be in the Church, nor that any thing that is worſhipped and adored ſhould be painted upon the Walls:* Words ſo clear and poſitive, as not to be evaded by all the little Shifts and Gloſſes which the Expoſitors of that *Canon* would put upon

Lib. 8. *p.* 389.

Can. 36. *p.* 50.

upon it. The first Use of Statues and Pictures in publick Churches was merely Historical, or to add some Beauty and Ornament to the Place, which After-ages improved into Superstition and Idolatry. The first that we meet with upon good Authority (for all the Instances brought for the first Ages are either false and spurious, or impertinent and to no purpose) is no older than the Times of *Epiphanius*, and then too met with no very welcome Entertainment, as may appear from *Epiphanius*'s own Epistle, translated by S. *Hierom*; where the Story in short is this: Coming (says he) to *Anablatha*, a Village in *Palestine*, and going into a Church to pray, I espy'd a Curtain hanging over the Door, whereon was painted the *Image of Christ*, or of some Saint; which when I looked upon, and saw the Image of a Man hanging up in the Church *contrary to the Authority of the Holy Scriptures*, I presently rent it, and advised the Guardians of the Church rather to make use of it as a Winding-Sheet for some poor Man's burying. Whereat when they were a little troubled, and said, 'Twas but just that since I had rent that Curtain, I should change it, and give them another; I promised them I would, and have now sent the best I could get; and pray intreat them to accept it, and give command that for the time to come no such Curtains, being *contrary to our Religion*, may be hung up in the Church of *Christ*; it more becoming your Place solicitously to remove whatever is offensive to, and unworthy of the Church of *Christ*, and the People committed to your Charge. This was written to *John* Bishop of *Jerusalem*, in whose Diocese the thing had been done; and the Case is so much the more pressing and weighty, by how much the greater Esteem and Value *Epiphanius* (then Bishop of *Salamine* in *Cyprus*) for his

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Inter opera Hieron. to. 2. p. 161.

Part I. great Age and excellent Learning, had in the Church of God. This Inſtance is ſo home and pregnant, that the Patrons of *Image-Worſhip* are at a mighty Loſs what to ſay to it, and after all are forced to cry out againſt it as *ſuppoſititious*. *Bellarmine* brings no leſs than nine Arguments (if ſuch they may be called) to make it ſeem probable; but had he been ingenuous, he might have given one Reaſon more true and ſatisfactory than all the reſt, why that Part of the Epiſtle ſhould be thought forged and ſpurious, *viz. Becauſe it makes ſo much againſt them.* More might be produced to this purpoſe, but by this I hope 'tis clear enough, that the honeſt Chriſtians of thoſe Times, as they thought it ſufficient to pray to God without making their Addreſſes to *Saints* and *Angels*, ſo they accounted their Churches fine enough without *Pictures* and *Images* to adorn them.

De Eccl. Triumph. l. 2. c. 9. col. 776.

Their Churches being built and beautify'd (ſo far as conſiſted with the Ability and Simplicity of thoſe Days) they ſought to derive a greater Value and Eſteem upon them by ſome peculiar *Conſecration*; for the Wiſdom and Piety of thoſe Times thought it not enough barely to devote them to the Publick Services of Religion, unleſs they alſo ſet them apart with ſolemn Rites of a formal *Dedication.* This had been an ancient Cuſtom both amongſt *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as old as *Solomon*'s Temple, nay, as *Moſes* and the *Tabernacle.* When 'twas firſt taken up by Chriſtians, is not eaſy to determine; only I do not remember to have met with the Footſteps of any ſuch thing in any approved Writer (for the *Decretal Epiſtles*, every one knows what their Faith is) till the Reign of *Conſtantine.* In his time Chriſtianity being become more proſperous and ſucceſsful, Churches were every where erected and repair'd; and no ſooner were ſo, but (as *Euſebius* tells us) they were ſolemnly

Hiſt. Eccl. l. 10. c. 3. p. 370.

ſolemnly conſecrated, and the Dedication celebrated with great Feſtivity and Rejoicing: An Inſtance whereof he there gives of the famous Church of *Tyre*, at the Dedication whereof he himſelf made that excellent *Oration* inſerted into the Body of his Hiſtory. About the thirtieth Year of his Reign he built a ſtately Church at *Jeruſalem*, over the *Sepulchre* of our *Saviour*, which was dedicated with ſingular Magnificence and Veneration; and for the greater Honour, by his Imperial Letters he ſummoned the Biſhops, who from all Parts of the *Eaſt* were then met in Council at *Tyre*, to be preſent and aſſiſting at the Solemnity. The Rites and Ceremonies uſed at theſe Dedications (as we find in *Euſebius*) were a great Confluence of Biſhops and Strangers from all Parts, the Performance of Divine Offices, Singing of Hymns and Pſalms, Reading and Expounding of the Scriptures, Sermons, and Orations; Receiving the Holy Sacrament, Prayers, and Thankſgivings, liberal Alms beſtowed on the Poor, and great Gifts given to the Church; and in ſhort, mighty Expreſſions of mutual Love and Kindneſs, and univerſal Rejoicing with one another. What other particular Ceremonies were introduced afterwards, concerns not me to enquire; only let me note, that under ſome of the Chriſtian Emperors, when *Paganiſm* lay gaſping for Life, and their Temples were purged and converted into Chriſtian Churches, they were uſually conſecrated only by placing a *Croſs* in them, as the venerable Enſign of the Chriſtian Religion; as appears by the Law of *Theodoſius* the younger to that purpoſe. The Memory of the Dedication of that Church at *Jeruſalem*, was conſtantly continued and kept alive in that Church; and *once a Year*, to wit, on the 14th of *September*, on which Day it had been dedicated, was ſolemnized with great Pomp and much Confluence of People from all Parts; the Solemnity uſually laſting eight

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De vita Conſt. c. 42, 43.

Cod. Theod. l. 16. tit. 10. de Pag. Sacrific. & Templis. leg. 25. ubi vid. Com. Gothofr. Niceph. Cal. Eccl. Hiſt. l. 8. c. 50. p. 653.

Part. I. eight Days together. Which doubtleſs gave birth to that Cuſtom of keeping *anniverſary Days* of Commemoration of the Dedication of Churches; which from this time forwards we frequently meet with in the Hiſtories of the Church, and much prevailed in after-Ages: Some Shadow whereof ſtill remains amongſt us at this day, in the *Wakes* obſerved in ſeveral Counties, which in Correſpondence with the *Encœnia* of the ancient Church, are annual Feſtivals kept in Country Villages in Memory of the Dedication of their particular Churches.

And becauſe it was a Cuſtom in ſome Ages of the Church, that no Church ſhould be *conſecrated* till it was *endowed*, it may give us Occaſion to enquire what *Revenues* Churches had in thoſe firſt Ages of *Chriſtianity*. 'Tis more than probable, that for a great while they had no other publick Incomes, than either what aroſe out of thoſe common Contributions which they made at their uſual Aſſemblies, every one giving or offering according to his Ability or Devotion, which was put into a common Stock or Treaſury; or what proceeded from the Offerings which they made out of the Improvement
Can. 3, 4. of their Lands, the *Apoſtolick Canons* providing that their Firſt-Fruits ſhould be partly offered at the Church, partly ſent home to the *Biſhops* and *Presbyters*. The Care of all which was committed to the *Preſident* or *Biſhop* of the Church; (for who, ſays
Can. 41. the Author of the fore-cited *Canons*, is fitter to be truſted with the *Riches* and *Revenues* of the Church, than he who is entruſted with the *precious Souls* of Men?) and by him diſpoſed of for the Maintenance of the *Clergy*, the Relief of the Poor, or whatever Neceſſities of the Church. As Chriſtianity increaſed, and Times grew better, they obtained more proper and fixed Revenues, Houſes and Lands being ſettled upon them; for ſuch 'tis certain they had, even during the times of Perſecution: For ſo

we

we find in a Law of *Constantine* and *Licinius*, where giving Liberty of Religion to *Christians*, and restoring them freely to the Churches which had been taken from them, and disposed of by former Emperors; they further add, And because (say they) the same *Christians* had not only Places wherein they were wont to assemble, but are also known to have had other Possessions, which were not the Propriety of any single Person, but belonged to the *whole Body and Community*: All these by this Law we command to be immediately restored to those *Christians*, to every Society and Community of them, what belonged to them. And in a Rescript to *Anulinus* the *Proconsul*, about the same matter, they particularly specify whether they be *Gardens* or *Houses*, or whatever else belonged to the Right and Propriety of those Churches, that with all Speed they be universally restored to them: The same which *Maximinus* also (though no good Friend to *Christians*, yet either out of Fear of *Constantine*, or from the Conviction of his Conscience, awakened by a terrible Sickness) had ordained for his Parts of the Empire. Afterwards *Constantine* set himself by all ways to advance the Honour and Interests of the Church. Out of the Tributes of every City, which were yearly paid into his Exchequer, he assigned a Portion to the Church and Clergy of that Place, and settled it by a Law; which (excepting the short Reign of *Julian*, who revoked it) was, as the Historian assures us, in force in his time. Where any of the Martyrs or Confessors had died without Kindred, or been banished their native Country, and left no Heir behind them, he ordained that their Estates and Inheritance should be given to the Church of that Place; and that whoever had seized upon them, or had bought them of the Exchequer, should restore them, and refer themselves to him for what Recompence should be made them. He took

Euseb. l. 10. c. 5. p. 389.

Ib. p. 390.

Lib. 9. p. 364.

Sozom. Hist. Ecc. l. 1. c. 8. p. 411.

Ib. l. 5. c. 5. p. 600.

Euseb. de Vit. Const: l. 2. c. 36. & seq.

Part I. took away the Reſtraint which former Emperors had laid upon the Bounty of pious and charitable Men, and gave every Man Liberty to leave what he would to the Church. He gave Salaries out of the publick Corn, which (though taken away by *Julian*) was reſtored by his Succeſſor *Jovianus*, and ratified as a perpetual Donation by the Law of *Valentinian* and *Marcianus*. After his time the Revenues of Churches increaſed every Day; pious and devout Perſons thinking they could never enough teſtify their Piety to God, by expreſſing their Bounty and Liberality to the Church.

Cod. l. 1. tit. 2. de SS. Eccl. leg. 1.

Ib. leg. 12.

I ſhall conclude this Diſcourſe, by obſerving what *Reſpect and Reverence* they were wont in thoſe Days to ſhew in the Church, as the ſolemn Place of Worſhip, and where God did more peculiarly manifeſt his Preſence: And this certainly was very great. They came into the Church as into the *Palace* of the *Great King* (as *Chryſoſtom* calls it) with Fear and Trembling; upon which Account he there preſſes the higheſt Modeſty and Gravity upon them. Before their going into the Church, they uſed to *waſh*, at leaſt their Hands, as *Tertullian* probably intimates, and *Chryſoſtom* expreſly tells us, carrying themſelves, while there, with the moſt profound Silence and Devotion. Nay, ſo great was the Reverence which they bore to the Church, that the *Emperors* themſelves, who otherwiſe never went without their Guard about them, yet when they came to go into the Church, uſed to lay down their *Arms*, to leave their *Guard* behind them, and to put off their *Crowns*; reckoning that the leſs Oſtentation they made of Power and Greatneſs there, the more firmly the Imperial Majeſty would be entailed upon them: As we find it in the Law of *Theodoſius* and *Valentinian*, inſerted at large into the laſt Edition of the *Theodoſian Code*. But of this we may probably ſpeak more, when we come to treat of the Manner of their publick Adoration.

Ep. ad Heb. in c. 9. Hom. 15. tom. 10. p. 1862.

Tert. de Orat. c. 11. p. 133.

Chryſoſt. Hom. 52. in Matth. p. 463.

Hom. in Joan. 72. p. 371.

Lib. 9. tit. 45. leg. 4. vid. Chryſ. Orat. poſt redit. ab exil. tom. 4. p. 850.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Lord's Day, and the Fasts and Festivals of the ancient Church.

Time, as necessary to religious Actions, as Place. Fixed Times of Publick Worship observed by all Nations. The Lord's Day chiefly observed by Christians. Styled Sunday, *and why. Peculiarly consecrated to the Memory of Christ's Resurrection. All kneeling at Prayer on this Day forbidden, and why. Their Publick Assemblies constantly held upon this Day. Forced to assemble before Day, in Times of Persecution; thence jeered by the Heathens, a* Latebrosa & Lucifugax Natio. *The Lord's Day ever kept as a Day of Rejoicing; all Fasting upon it forbidden. The great Care of* Constantine, *and the first Christian Emperors, for the Honour and Observance of this Day. Their Laws to that Purpose. Their constant and conscientious Attendance upon Publick Worship on the Lord's Day. Canons of ancient Councils about absenting from Publick Worship.* Sabbatum *or* Saturday *kept in the East as a religious Day, with all the Publick Solemnities of Divine Worship. How it came to be so. Otherwise in the Western Churches; observed by them as a Fast, and why. This not universal. S.* Ambrose *his Practice at* Milan, *and Counsel to S.* Augustine *in the Case. Their solemn Fasts, either Weekly or Annual: Weekly on* Wednesdays *and* Fridays, *held till*

Part I.

till Three in the Afternoon. Annual Fast, that of Lent *how ancient. Upon what Account called* Quadragesima. *Observed with great Strictness. The* Hebdomada Magna, *or the Holy Week, kept with singular Austerity, and the Reason of it. Festivals observed by the Primitive Christians. That of* Easter *as ancient as the times of the Apostles. An Account of the Famous Controversy between the Eastern and Western Churches, about the keeping of* Easter. *The intemperate Spirit of Pope* Victor. Irenæus *his moderate Interposal. The Case finally determined by the Council of* Nice. *The Vigils of this Feast observed with great Expressions of rejoicing. The Bounty of Christian Emperors upon* Easter-Day. *The Feast of* Pentecost *how ancient. Why styled* Whitsunday. Dominica in Albis, *why so called. The whole Space between* Easter *and* Whitsuntide *kept Festival. The* Acts of the Apostles, *why publickly read during that time. The Feast of the* Epiphany *anciently what.* Christmas-Day, *the ancient Observation of it.* Epiphany *in a strict Sense what, and why so called. The* Memoriæ Martyrum, *what; when probably first begun. The great Reverence they had for Martyrs. Their Passions styled their Birth-Day, and why. These Anniversary Solemnities kept at the Tombs of Martyrs. Over these magnificent Churches erected afterwards. What religious Exercises performed at those Meetings. The first Rise of Martyrologies. Oblations for Martyrs,*

tyrs. How understood in the ancient Writers of the Church. These Festivals kept with great Rejoicing, mutual Love and Charity. Their συμπόσια or common Feasts. Markets held for that Purpose in those Places. The ill Use which after-times made of these Memorials. Chap. 7.

TIME is a Circumstance no less inseparable from religious Actions, than Place; for Man consisting of a Soul and Body, cannot always be actually engaged in the Service of God; that's the Privilege of Angels, and Souls freed from the Fetters of Mortality. So long as we are here, we must worship God with respect to our present State, and consequently of Necessity have some definite and particular Time to do it in. Now, that Man might not be left to a floating Uncertainty, in a Matter of so great Importance; in all Ages and Nations Men have been guided by the very Dictates of Nature, to pitch upon some *certain Seasons*, wherein to assemble and meet together, to perform the Publick Offices of Religion. What, and how many were the publick *Festivals* instituted and observed, either amongst *Jews* or *Gentiles*, I am not concerned to take Notice of. For the ancient Christians, they ever had their peculiar Seasons, their solemn and stated Times of Meeting together to perform the common Duties of Divine Worship; of which, because the *LORD*'s-*DAY* challenges the Precedency of all the rest, we shall begin first with that. And being unconcern'd in all the Controversies, which in the late Times were raised about it; I shall only note some Instances of the Piety of Christians, in reference to this Day, which I have observed, in passing through the Writers of those Times. For the Name of this Day of Publick Worship, it is sometimes (especially by *Justin Martyr* and

Part I. and *Tertullian*) called *Sunday*; becauſe it happened upon that Day of the Week, which by the Heathens was dedicated to the Sun; and therefore, as being beſt known to them, the Fathers commonly made uſe of it in their Apologies to the Heathen Governors. This Title continued after the World became Chriſtian; and ſeldom it is, that it paſſeth under any other Name in the Imperial Edicts of the firſt Chriſtian Emperors. But the more proper and prevailing Name was κυριακὴ, or *Dies Do-*
Rev. 1. 10. *minica*, the *Lord's Day*, as 'tis called by S. *John* himſelf; as being that Day of the Week, whereon our Lord made his triumphant Return from the Dead.
Ap. 2. p. 99. This, *Juſtin Martyr* aſſures us, was the true Original of the Title: Upon *Sunday* (ſays he) we all aſſemble and meet together, as being the firſt Day, wherein God, parting the Darkneſs from the rude *Chaos*, created the World, and the ſame Day whereon *Jeſus Chriſt*, our Saviour, roſe again from the Dead; for he was crucified the Day before *Saturday*, and the Day after (which is *Sunday*) he appeared to his Apoſtles and Diſciples: By this means obſerving a *kind* of Analogy and Proportion with the *Jewiſh* Sabbath, which had been inſtituted by God himſelf. For as that Day was kept as a Commemoration of God's *Sabbath*, of reſting from the Work of Creation; ſo was this ſet apart for religious Uſes, as the ſolemn Memorial of *Chriſt*'s reſting from the Work of our Redemption in this World, completed upon the Day of his Reſurrection. Which brings into my Mind that Cuſtom
Ap. 2. p. 98. of theirs, ſo univerſally common in thoſe Days;
De Coron. c. 3. p. 102. that whereas at other times they *kneeled* at Pray-
Reſp. at Qu. 115. p. 468. ers, on the Lord's Day they always prayed *ſtanding*, as is expreſly affirmed both by *Juſtin Martyr* and *Tertullian*: The Reaſon of which we find in the *Author* of the *Queſtions* and *Anſwers* in *Juſtin Martyr*. It is (ſays he) that by this means we may be

be put in mind both of our Fall by Sin, and our Resurrection or Restitution by the Grace of Christ: That for six Days we pray upon our Knees, is in token of our Fall by Sin; but that on the Lord's-Day we do not bow the Knee, doth symbolically represent our *Resurrection*, by which, through the Grace of Christ, we are delivered from our Sins, and the Power of Death. This, he there tells us, was a Custom derived from the very times of the Apostles, for which he cites *Irenæus*, in his Book concerning *Easter*. And this Custom was maintained with so much Vigour, that when some began to neglect it, the great Council of *Nice* took Notice of it, and ordained, That there should be a constant *Uniformity* in this case, and that on the Lord's-day (and at such other times as were usual) Men should stand when they made their Prayers to God. So fit and reasonable did they think it to do all possible Honour to that Day, on which Christ rose from the Dead. Therefore we may observe all along in the Sacred Story, that after Christ's Resurrection, the Apostles and Primitive Christians did especially assemble upon *the first Day of the Week*. And whatever they might do at other times, yet there are many Passages that intimate, that the first Day of the Week was their more solemn Time of meeting. On this Day it was, that they were met together when our Saviour first appeared to them, and so again the next Week after. On this Day they were assembled, when the Holy Ghost so visibly came down upon them, when *Peter* preached that excellent Sermon, converted and baptized three thousand Souls. Thus when S. *Paul* was taking his Leave at *Troas*, upon the *first Day of the Week*, when the Disciples came together to *break Bread*, *i. e.* as almost all agree, to celebrate the Holy Sacrament; he preached to them, sufficiently intimating, that upon that Day it was their usual Custom to meet

Chap. 7.

Ap. 2. *p.* 98. *De Coron. c.* 3. *p.* 102. *Resp. ad Qu.* 115. *p.* 468.

Can. 20.

1 *Cor.* 16. 1, 2.

Part I. in that manner. And elſewhere giving Directions to the Church of *Corinth* (as he had done in the like Caſe to other Churches) concerning their Contributions to the poor ſuffering Brethren, he bids them lay it aſide upon the firſt Day of the Week, which ſeems plainly to reſpect their religious Aſſemblies upon that Day; for then it was that every one, according to his Ability, depoſited ſomething to the Relief of the Poor, and the Uſes of the Church.

After the Apoſtles, the *Chriſtians* conſtantly obſerved this Day, meeting together for Prayer, expounding and hearing of the Scriptures, Celebration of the Sacrament, and other publick Duties of Religion. *Upon the Day called Sunday* (ſays *Juſtin Martyr*) *all of us that live either in City or Country, meet together in one Place*; and what they then did, he there deſcribes, of which afterwards. This doubtleſs *Pliny* meant, when giving *Trajan* an Account of the *Chriſtians*, he tells him, That they were wont to meet together to worſhip Chriſt *ſtato die*, upon a ſet certain Day, by which he can be reaſonably underſtood to deſign no other but the Lord's Day; for though they probably met at other times, yet he takes Notice of this only, either becauſe the *Chriſtians*, whom he had examined, had not told him of their meeting at other times, or becauſe this was their moſt publick and ſolemn Convention, and which in a manner ſwallowed up the reſt. By a violent Perſecution of thoſe times, the *Chriſtians* were forced to meet together before Day; ſo *Pliny*, in the ſame Place, tells the Emperor, that they aſſembled before *Day-light to ſing their Morning-Hymns to Chriſt*. Whence it is that *Tertullian* ſo often mentions their *nocturnal Convocations*; for putting the Caſe that his Wife after his Deceaſe ſhould marry with a *Gentile* Husband, among other Inconveniences he asks her, whether ſhe thought

Ap. 2. *p.* 98.

Lib. 10. *ep.* 97.

Ad uxor. l. 2. *c.* 4. *p.* 168.

he

he would be willing to let her rise from his Bed to go to their *Night-meetings?* And in the case of Persecution he tells *Fabius*, That if they could not celebrate *Dominica Solennia*, their Lord's-day Solemnities in the Day-time, they had the Night sufficiently clear with the *Light* of Christ. This gave Occasion to their spightful Adversaries to calumniate and asperse them. The Heathen in *Minutius* charges them with their *Night-Congregations*, upon which Account they are there scornfully called *Latebrosa & lucifugax Natio, an obscure and sculking Generation.* And the very first thing that *Celsus* objects, is, That the *Christians* had private and clancular Assemblies or Combinations: To which *Origen* answers, That if it were so, they might thank them for it, who would not suffer them to exercise it more openly; that the Christian Doctrine was sufficiently evident and obvious, and better known through the World than the Opinion and Sentiments of their best Philosophers; and that if there were some Mysteries in the Christian Religion which were not communicated to every one, 'twas no other thing than what was common in the several Sects of their own Philosophy. But to return.

Chap. 7.

De fug. in persecut. c. 14. p. 543.

Min. Fel. p. 7.

Orig. adv. Cels. 1. p. 4. ------ 7.

They looked upon the *Lord's-day*, as a Time to be celebrated with great Expressions of Joy, as being the happy Memory of Christ's Resurrection, and accordingly restrained whatever might savour of Sorrow and Sadness; Fasting on that Day they prohibited with the greatest Severity, accounting it utterly unlawful, as *Tertullian* informs us. It was a very bitter Censure of *Ignatius* (or whose soever that Epistle was, for certainly it was not his) that whoever *fasts* on a *Lord's-day* is a *Murderer of Christ*; however 'tis certain, that they never fasted on those Days, no not in the time of *Lent* itself. Nay, the *Montanists*, though otherwise great Pretenders to Fasting and Mortification, did yet abstain from it

De coron. mil. c. 3. p. 102.

Ep. ad Philip. p. 112.

Part I.

on the Lord's Day. And as they accounted it a joyful and good Day, so they did whatever they thought might contribute to the Honour of it. No sooner was *Constantine* come over to the Church, but his principal Care was about the *Lord's-day*; he commanded it to be solemnly observed, and that by all Persons whatsoever; he made it to all a Day of *Rest*, that Men might have nothing to do but to worship God, and be better instructed in the Christian Faith, and spend their whole Time, without any thing to hinder them, in Prayer and Devotion, according to the Custom and Discipline of the Church. And for those in his Army, who yet remained in their Paganism and Infidelity, he commanded them upon *Lord's-days* to go out into the Fields, and there pour out their Souls in hearty Prayers to God. And that none might pretend their own Inability to the Duty, he himself composed and gave them a short *Form of Prayer*, which he enjoined them to make use of every *Lord's-day*. So careful was he, that this Day should not be *dishonoured* or *mis-employed*, even by those who were yet *Strangers* and *Enemies* to *Christianity*. He moreover ordained, That there should be no *Courts of Judicature* open upon this Day, no *Suits* or *Trials at Law*, but that for any Works of Mercy, such as the *emancipating* and setting free of Slaves or Servants, this might be done. That there should be no Suits or demanding Debts upon this Day, was confirmed by several Laws of succeeding Emperors; and that no *Arbitrators*, who had the Umpirage of any Business lying before them, should at any time have Power to determine or take up litigious Causes, Penalties being entailed upon any that transgressed herein. *Theodosius* the Great (*An.* 386.) by a second Law ratified one which he had passed long before, wherein he expressly prohibited all publick *Shews* upon the Lord's-day, that the Worship of God

Euseb. de vit. Const. l. 4. *c.* 18. 19, 20. *p.* 534.

Cod. Just. l. 3. *ti.* 12. *de feriis, l.* 3.

Cod. Theod. l. 2. *tit.* 8. *de feriis, l.* 1. *lib.* 1. *tit.* 8. *l.* 3. *Ib. l.* 15. *tit.* 4. *de spectac. l.* 2.

God might not be confounded with those prophane Solemnities. This Law the younger *Theodosius*, some few Years after, confirmed and enlarged, enacting, That on the Lord's-day (and some other Festivals there mentioned) not only *Christians*, but even *Jews* and *Heathens* should be restrained from the Pleasure of all *Sights* and *Spectacles*, and the *Theatres* be shut up in every Place. And whereas it might so happen, that the *Birth-day* or *Inauguration* of the Emperor might fall upon that Day, therefore to let the People know, how infinitely he preferred the Honour of God before the Concerns of his own Majesty and Greatness, he commanded that if it should so happen, that then the Imperial Solemnity should be put off, and defered till another Day. Chap. 7. *Ib. Leg. 5. Dominicio.*

I shall take Notice but of one Instance more of their great Observance of this Day, and that was their constant *Attendance* upon the Solemnities of publick Worship. They did not think it enough to read, and pray, and praise God at *Home*, but made Conscience of appearing in the *publick* Assemblies, from which nothing but Sickness and absolute Necessity did detain them: And if sick, or in Prison, or under Banishment, nothing troubled them more, than that they could not come to Church, and join their Devotions to the common Services. If Persecution at any time forced them to keep a little close, yet no sooner was there the least Mitigation, but they presently returned to their open Duty, and publickly met all together. No trivial Pretences, no light Excuses were then admitted for any one's Absence from the Congregation; but according to the Merit of the Cause, severe Censures were passed upon them. The Synod of *Illiberis* provided, That if any Men dwelling in a City (where usually Churches were nearest at Hand) should for Three *Lord's-days* absent

Part I. himſelf from the Church, he ſhould for ſome time be ſuſpended the Communion, that he might appear to be corrected for his Fault. They allowed no ſeparate Aſſemblies, no Congregations but what met in the publick Church. If any Man took upon him to make a Breach, and to draw People into Corners, he was preſently condemned, and a ſuitable Penalty put upon him. When *Euſtathius* Biſhop of *Sebaſtria* (a Man pretending to great Strictneſs and Auſterity of Life) began to caſt off the Diſcipline of the Church, and to introduce many odd Obſervations of his own; amongſt others, to condemn Prieſts that were married, to faſt on the Lord's-day, and to keep Meetings in private Houſes, drawing away many, but eſpecially *Women* (as the Hiſtorian obſerves) who leaving their Husbands, were led away with Error, and from that into great Filthineſs and Impurity: No ſooner did the Biſhops of thoſe Parts diſcover it, but meeting in Council at *Gangra*, the *Metropolis* of *Paphlagonia*, about the Year 340, they condemned and caſt them out of the Church, paſſing theſe two *Canons* amongſt the reſt; *If any one ſhall teach that the Houſe of God is to be deſpiſed, and the Aſſemblies that are held in it, let him be accurſed. If any ſhall take upon him out of the Church privately to preach at home, and making light of the Church, ſhall do thoſe things that belong only to the Church, without the Preſence of the Prieſts, and the Leave and Allowance of the Biſhop, let him be accurſed.* Correſpondent to which, the *Canons* called *Apoſtolical*, and the Council of *Antioch* ordain, That if any *Presbyter*, ſetting light by his own *Biſhop*, ſhall withdraw and ſet up *ſeparate* Meetings, and erect another *Altar* (*i. e.* ſays *Zonaras*, keep unlawful Conventicles, preach privately, and adminiſter the Sacrament) that in ſuch a Caſe he ſhall be *depoſed*, as ambitious and tyrannical, and the People com-

Can. 21. *p.* 28.

Soz. l. 3. *c.* 14. *p.* 521.

Concil. Gangr. Can. 4, 5.

Can. 31. *Conc. Antioch. Can.* 5.

communicating with him be *excommunicate*, as being factious and schismatical; only this not to be done till after the third Admonition. After all that has been said, I might farther shew what Esteem and Value the first Christians had of the Lord's-day, by those great and honourable things they have spoken concerning it, of which I'll produce but two Passages; the one is, that in the Epistle *ad Magnesios*, which, if not *Ignatius*'s, must yet be acknowledged an ancient Author: *Let every one* (says he) *that loves Christ keep the Lord's-day Festival, the Resurrection-day, the Queen and Empress of all Days, in which our Life was raised again, and Death conquered by our Lord and Saviour.* The other that of *Theophilus*, Bishop of *Alexandria*, who speaks thus; *That both Custom and Reason challenge from us that we should honour the Lord's-day, and keep it Festival, seeing on that Day it was that our Lord Jesus Christ compleated his Resurrection from the Dead.*

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Pag. 149.

Edict. Theoph. apud Balsam. in Synod. tom. 2. par. 1. p. 170.

Next to the Lord's-day, the *Sabbath* or *Saturday* (for so the Word *Sabbatum* is constantly used in the Writings of the Fathers, when speaking of it as it relates to *Christians*) was held by them in great Veneration; and especially in the *Eastern* Parts, honoured with all the publick Solemnities of Religion. For which we are to know, That the Gospel in those Parts mainly prevailing amongst the *Jews*, they being generally the first Converts to the *Christian* Faith, they still retained a mighty Reverence for the *Mosaick* Institutions, and especially for the *Sabbath*, as that which had been appointed by God himself (as the Memorial of his Rest from the Work of Creation) settled by their great Master *Moses*, and celebrated by their Ancestors for so many Ages, as the solemn Day of their publick Worship; and were therefore very loth that it should be wholly antiquated and laid

Part I. aſide. For this Reaſon it ſeemed good to the Prudence of thoſe times (as in others of the *Jewiſh* Rites, ſo in this) to indulge the Humour of that People, and to keep the Sabbath as a Day for religious Offices. Hence they uſually had moſt Parts of Divine Service performed upon that Day; they met together for Publick Prayers, for reading the Scriptures, Celebration of the Sacraments, and ſuch like Duties. This is plain, not only from ſome Paſſages in *Ignatius* and *Clemens*'s Conſtitutions, but alſo from Writers of more unqueſtionable Credit and Authority. *Athanaſius*, Biſhop of *Alexandria*, tells us, that they aſſembled on *Saturdays*, not that they were infected with *Judaiſm*; but only to worſhip *Jeſus Chriſt*, the Lord of the Sabbath: And *Socrates* ſpeaking of the uſual Times of their Publick Meeting, calls the *Sabbath* and the *Lord's-day*, the Weekly Feſtivals, on which the Congregation was wont to meet in the Church for the Performance of Divine Services. Therefore the Council of *Laodicea*, amongſt other things, decreed, That upon *Saturdays* the Goſpels and other Scriptures ſhould be read, that in *Lent* the Euchariſt ſhould not be celebrated but upon *Saturday* and the *Lord's-day*; and upon thoſe Days only, in the Time of *Lent*, it ſhould be lawful to commemorate and rehearſe the Names of Martyrs. Upon this Day alſo, as well as upon *Sunday*, all *Faſts* were ſeverely prohibited (an infallible Argument they counted it a Feſtival-day) one *Saturday* in the Year only excepted, *viz.* that before *Eaſter-day*, which was always obſerved as a Solemn Faſt: Things ſo commonly known, as to need no Proof. But though the Church thought fit thus far to correſpond with the *Jewiſh* Converts, as ſolemnly to obſerve the Sabbath; yet to take away all Offence, and to vindicate themſelves from Compliance with *Judaiſm*, they openly declared, That they did it only in a

Homil. de Sement. in init.

Hiſt. Eccl. l. 6. c. 8. p. 312.

Can. 16. 41 --- 51.

Chriſtian

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Athanas. Homil. de Sement. to. 1. p. 835. Can. 29.

Christian way, and kept it not as a *Jewish Sabbath*, as is expressly affirm'd by *Athanasius*, *Nazianzen*, and others; and the forementioned *Laodicean* Synod has a *Canon* to this purpose; *That Christians should not* Judaize, *and rest from all Labour on the Sabbath, but follow their ordinary Works*, (*i. e.* so far as consisted with their Attendance upon the Publick Assemblies) *and should not entertain such Thoughts of it, but that still they should prefer the Lord's-day before it, and on that Day rest as* Christians: *But if any were found to* Judaize, *they should be accursed.*

Thus stood the Case in the *Eastern* Church; in those in the *West* we find it somewhat different. Amongst them it was not observed as a Religious *Festival*, but kept as a constant *Fast*. The Reason whereof (as 'tis given by Pope *Innocent* in an Epistle to the Bishop of *Eugubium*, where he treats of this very Case) seems most probable: If *(says he)* we commemorate Christ's Resurrection not only at *Easter*, but every *Lord's-day*, and fast upon *Friday*, because 'twas the Day of his Passion, we ought not to pass by *Saturday*, which is the middle Time between the Days of Grief and Joy; the Apostles themselves spending those two Days (*viz. Friday* and the *Sabbath)* in great Sorrow and Heaviness: And he thinks no doubt ought to be made, but that the Apostles fasted upon those two Days; whence the Church had a *Tradition*, that the Sacraments were not to be administer'd on those Days; and therefore concludes, that every *Saturday*, or *Sabbath*, ought to be kept a Fast. To the same purpose the Council of *Illiberis* ordained, That a *Saturday* Festival was an Error that ought to be reformed, and that Men ought to fast upon every Sabbath. But tho' this seems to have been the general Practice, yet it did not obtain in all Places of the *West* alike. In *Italy* itself 'twas otherwise at *Milan*; where *Saturday* was a Festival; and

Innocent. Ep. ad Decium Eugubin. c. 4. Sabbato vero. Can. 36. p. 35.

'tis

Part I.

'tis said in the Life of S. *Ambrose*, who was Bishop of that See, That he constantly dined as well upon *Saturday* as the *Lord's-day* (it being his Custom to dine upon no other Days but those, and the Memorials of the Martyrs) and used also upon that Day to preach to the People; tho' so great was the Prudence and Moderation of that good Man, that he bound not up himself in these indifferent Things; but when he was at *Milan* he dined upon *Saturdays*, and when he was at *Rome* he fasted as they did upon those Days. This S. *Augustin* assures us he had from his own Mouth: For when his Mother *Monica* came after him to *Milan*, (where he then resided) she was greatly troubled to find the *Saturday*-Fast not kept there as she had found it in other Places. For her Satisfaction he immediately went to consult S. *Ambrose*, then Bishop of that Place, who told him, he could give him no better Advice in the Case, than to do as he did: *When I come to* Rome, (said he) *I fast on on the* Saturday *as they do at* Rome; *when I am here, I do not fast. So likewise you, to whatsoever Church you come, observe the Custom of that Place, if you mean not either to give or take Offence.* With this Answer he satisfy'd his Mother, and ever after, when he thought of it, look'd upon it as an *Oracle* sent from *Heaven*. So that even in *Italy* the *Saturday*-Fast was not universally observed. Nay, a very *learned Man* (and a Bishop of the *Roman* Church) thinks it highly probable, That for the first Ages especially, *Saturday* was no more kept as a Fast at *Rome*, than in the Churches of the *East*: Tho' the great Argument whereby he would establish it, *viz.* because some *Latin* Churches, who must needs follow the Pattern of the Church of *Rome*, did not keep it so, is very infirm and weak; and needs no more than that very Instance of the Church of *Milan* to refute it, which, tho' under the *Pope*'s Nose, did not

Paulin. in vit. Amb. operibus Ambros. præfix.

Ad Janu. Ep. 118. *col.* 557. *com.* 2.

Albasp. de vet. Eccl. rit. obs. 13. *p.* 90.

not yet keep that Day as a Fast, altho' this was many Years after it had been so established and observed at *Rome*. Chap. 7.

And now that I am got into this Business, I shall once for all dispatch the Matter about their *Fasts*, before I proceed to their other Festivals. 'Tis certain, the ancient Christians had two sorts of solemn Fasts, *weekly and annual*. Their *weekly* Fasts (call'd *jejunia quartæ & sextæ feriæ*) were kept on *Wednesdays* and *Fridays*, appointed so, as we are told, for this Reason, because on *Wednesday* our Lord was betray'd by *Judas*, on *Friday* he was crucify'd by the *Jews*. This Custom *Epiphanius* (how truly I know not) refers to the Apostles, and elsewhere tells us, that those Days were observed as Fasts thro' the whole World. These Fasts they called their *Stations* (not because they *stood* all the while, but by an Allusion to the *military Stations*, and keeping their Guards, as *Tertullian* observes, they kept close at it) and they usually lasted ἕως ὥρας ἐννάτης, as *Epiphanius* informs us, *till the ninth Hour, i. e.* till three of the Clock in the Afternoon; at which time having ended their Fast-Devotions, they received the *Eucharist*, and then broke up the Station, and went home; whence it is, that *Tertullian* calls them *stationum semijejunia*, the *half Fasts of Stations*. And he seems to censure the Practice of some, who having privately resolved upon an entire Fast of the whole Day, refused to receive the *Eucharist* at the publick Stationary Fasts, because they thought that by eating and drinking the Sacramental Elements, they put a Period to their Fasting: For it was usual in those times with many, after the Stationary Fast was ended, to continue and hold on the Fast until the Evening. The Historian tells us, That it had been a very ancient Custom in the Church of *Alexandria*, upon those Days to have the Scriptures read and expounded, and all other

Vid. Constit. Ap. l. 5. c. 14. p. 929. l. 7. c. 24. p. 978. Serm. Compen. p. 466. Hæres. 85. p. 387. De Orat. c. 14. p. 136. Serm. Compend. de fid. p. 466. De jejun. c. 13. p. 551. De Orat. c. 14. p. 135.

Vid. de jejun. p. 545. A. p. 544. B.

Socr. l. 5. c. 22. p. 28.

Parts

Part I. Parts of Divine Service, except the Celebration of the Sacrament; and that it was chiefly in those days that *Origen* was wont to teach the People. Whether the Omitting of the Sacrament then might be a peculiar Custom to that Church, I know not; certain I am, 'twas upon those days adminiſtred in other Places. So S. *Baſil*, enumerating the times how oft they received it every Week, expreſly puts *Wedneſday* and *Friday* into the Number. The Remains of theſe *primitive Stations* are yet obſerved in our *Church* at this day, which by her 15*th Canon* has ordained, *That tho'* Wedneſdays *and* Fridays *be not Holy Days, yet that weekly upon thoſe times* Miniſter *and* People *ſhall reſort to Church at the accuſtomed Hours of Prayer.*

Tom. 3. *Ep.* 289. *p.* 279.

Their *Annual* Faſt was that of *Lent*, by way of Preparation to the Feaſt of our Saviour's Reſurrection; this (tho' not in the modern Uſe of it) was very ancient, tho' far from being an *Apoſtolical Canon*, as a *learned Prelate* of our Church has fully proved. From the very firſt Age of the Chriſtian Church, 'twas cuſtomary to faſt before *Eaſter*; but for how long, it was variouſly obſerved according to different Times and Places; ſome faſting ſo many Days, others ſo many Weeks, and ſome ſo many Days in each Week; and 'tis moſt probably thought that it was at firſt ſtyled τεσσαρακοστὴ, or *Quadrageſima*, not becauſe 'twas a Faſt of *forty Days*, but of *forty Hours*, begun about Twelve on *Friday*, (the time of our Saviour's falling under the Power of Death) and continued till *Sunday-morning*, the time of his riſing from the Dead. Afterwards it was enlarged to a longer time, drawn out into more Days, and then Weeks, till it came to three, and at laſt to ſix or ſeven Weeks. But concerning the different Obſervations of it in ſeveral Places, let them who deſire to know more, conſult *Socrates* and *Sozomen*, who both ſpeak enough of it. This

Bp. Taylor Duct. Dub. lib. 3. *c.* 4. *p.* 629.

Id. ib. vid. Thorndike rel. aſſemb. c. 8. *p.* 276.

Qua-

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Quadrageſimal Faſt was kept in thoſe times with great Piety and Religion, People generally applying themſelves with all ſeriouſneſs to Acts of Penance and Mortification; whence *Chryſoſtom* calls *Lent* the Remedy and *Phyſick* of our Souls; and to the end that the Obſervation of it might be more grave and ſolemn, *Theodoſius M.* and his Collegue Emperors paſſed two Laws, that during the time of *Lent* all Proceſs and Inquiry into criminal Actions ſhould be ſuſpended, and no corporal Puniſhments inflicted upon any; it being unfit (as the ſecond of thoſe Laws expreſſes it) that in the holy time of *Lent* the *Body* ſhould ſuffer Puniſhment, while the *Soul* is expecting Abſolution. But with what Care ſoever they kept the preceding Parts, 'tis certain they kept the Cloſe of it with a mighty Strictneſs and Auſterity, I mean the laſt Week of it, that which immediately preceded the Feaſt of *Eaſter*; this they conſecrated to more peculiar Acts of Prayer, Abſtinence and Devotion; and whereas in the other Parts of *Lent* they ended their Faſt in the Evening, in this they extended it to the Cock-crowing, or firſt Glympſe of the Morning. To be ſure they ended it not before Midnight, for to break up the Faſt before that time, was accounted a piece of great Prophaneneſs and Intemperance, as *Dionyſius* Biſhop of *Alexandria* determines in a Letter to *Baſilides*, wherein he largely and learnedly ſtates the Caſe. This was the *Hebdomada magna*, the *great* (or *holy*) Week; ſo called (ſays *Chryſoſtom*) not that it has either more *Hours* or *Days* in it than other Weeks, but becauſe this is the Week in which *truly great* and ineffable good things were purchaſed for us; within this time Death was conquer'd, the Curſe deſtroy'd, the Devil's Tyranny diſſolved, his Inſtruments broken, Heaven opened, Angels rejoyced, the Partition-Wall broken down, and God and Man

Socrat. l. 5. c. 22. Soz. l. 7. c. 19. Hom. 1. in Gen. to. 2. p. 1. Cod. Theod. lib. 9. Tit. 35. de Quæſtion. 4 & 5.

Conſtit. Apoſt. l. 5. c. 17, 18. p. 932. Epiphan. λογ. σύντομ. p. 466.

Apud. Zonar. in Synod. tom. 2. part 1. p. 1. Hom. 30. in Gen. p. 328.

Part I. Man reconciled. For this Cauſe we call it the *great Week*, for this Cauſe Men faſt, and watch, and do Alms, to do the greater Honour to it: The Emperors themſelves, to ſhew what Veneration they have for this time, commanding all Suits and Proceſſes at Law to ceaſe, Tribunal-doors to be ſhut up, and Priſoners to be ſet free; imitating herein their great Lord and Maſter, who by his Death at this time deliver'd us from the Priſon and the Chains of Sin; meaning herein thoſe Laws of *Theodoſius*, *Gratian*, and *Valentinian*, which we lately mention'd.

We proceed now to enquire what other Feſtivals there were in thoſe firſt Ages of the Church, which I find to be chiefly theſe: *Eaſter*, *Whitſuntide*, and *Epiphany*, which comprehends two, *Chriſtmas* and *Epiphany*, properly ſo called. I reckon them not in their proper Order, but as I ſuppoſe them to to have taken place in the Church; of theſe *Eaſter* challenges the Precedence, both for its Antiquity and the great Stir about it. That in and from the very Times of the Apoſtles (beſides the Weekly Return of the Lord's Day) there has been always obſerved an *Anniverſary* Feſtival in Memory of *Chriſt's Reſurrection*, no Man can doubt, that has any Inſight into the Affairs of the ancient Church; all the Diſpute was about the particular Time when it was to be kept, which became the Matter of as famous a Controverſy as any that in thoſe Ages exerciſed the Chriſtian World. The State of the Caſe was briefly this: The Churches of *Aſia* the leſs, kept their *Eaſter* upon the ſame Day whereon the *Jews* celebrated their *Paſſover*, *viz.* upon the firſt Day of the firſt Month (which always began with the Appearance of the Moon) moſtly anſwering to our *March*; and this they did, upon what Day of the Week ſoever it fell, and hence were ſtyled *Quartodecimans*, becauſe keeping *Eaſter*

quarta

quarta decima Luna, upon the 14th Day after the φάσις, or Appearance of the *Moon*. The other Churches, and especially those of the *West*, did not follow this Custom, but kept *Easter* upon the *Lord's-day* following the Day of the Jewish Passover; partly the more to honour the Day, and partly to distinguish between *Jews* and *Christians*. The *Asiaticks* pleaded for themselves the Practice of the *Apostles*; *Polycarpus* Bishop of *Smyrna*, who had lived and conversed with them, having kept it upon that day, together with S. *John* and the rest of the Apostles; as *Irenæus* (who himself knew *Polycarpus*, and doubtless had it from his own Mouth) speaks in a Letter about this very thing, tho' himself was on the other side. And *Polycrates*, in a Letter to the same purpose, instances not only in S. *John*, but S. *Philip* the Apostle, who himself and his whole Family used so to keep it; from whom it had been convey'd down in a constant and uninterrupted Observance thro' all the Bishops of those Places, some whereof he there enumerates, and tells us, That seven Bishops of that Place in a constant Succession had been his Kinsmen, and himself the eighth, and that it had never been kept by him upon any other Day. This we are not so to understand, as if S. *John* and the Apostles had instituted this Festival, and commanded it to be observed upon that Day; but rather that they did it by way of *Condescension*, accommodating their Practice, in a Matter indifferent, to the Humour of the *Jewish* Converts (whose Number in those Parts was very great) as they had done before in several other Cases, and particularly in observing the *Sabbath* or *Saturday*. The other Churches also (says *Eusebius*) had for their Patronage an *Apostolical Tradition*, or at least pretended it; and were the much more numerous Party. This Difference was the Spring of great Bustles in the Church; for the Bishops of *Rome* stickled hard to impose their Customs

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Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 5. *c.* 24. *p.* 193.

Ib. p. 191.

Ib. c. 23. *p.* 190.

Part I. Customs upon the *Eastern* Churches; whereupon *Polycarpus* comes over to *Rome* to confer with *Anicetus*, who was then Bishop, about it; and tho' they could not agree the Matter, yet they parted fairly. After this, Pope *Victor* renew'd the Quarrel, and was so fierce and peremptory in the Case, that he either actually did, or (as a learned Man inclines rather to think, probably to mollify the *Odium* of the Fact) severely threatned to excommunicate those *Eastern* Churches for standing out against it. This rash and bold Attempt was ill resented by the sober and moderate Men of his own Party, who writ to him about it; and particularly *Irenæus*, (a Man, as *Eusebius* notes, truly answering his *Name*, both in his Temper and in his Life *quiet and peaceable*) who gravely reproved him for renting the Peace of the Church, and troubling so many famous Churches for observing the Customs derived to them from their Ancestors; with much more to the same purpose. But the *Asian* Bishops little regarding what was either said or done at *Rome*, still went on in their old Course, tho' by the diligent Practices of the other Party, they lost Ground, but yet still made Shift to keep the Cause on foot till the time of *Constantine*; who finding the Controversy amongst others much to disquiet the Peace of the Church, did for this and some other Reasons summon the great Council of *Nice*, by whom this Question was solemnly determined, *Easter* ordained to be kept upon one and the same Day throughout the World, not according to the Custom of the *Jews*, but upon the *Lord's-day*; and this Decree ratify'd and publish'd by the Imperial Letters to all the Churches.

Id. l. 4. c. 14. p. 127.

H. Vales. Annal. in Euseb. l. 5. c. 24. p. 105. col. 1.

Euseb. de vit. Constant. l. 3. c. 14, 17.

The Eves, or *Vigils* of this Festival were wont to be celebrated with more than ordinary Pomp, with solemn Watchings, with Multitudes of lighted *Torches*, both in the Churches and their own private Houses,

Naz. Or. 2. in Pasch. Orat. 42. p. 676.

Houſes, ſo as to turn the Night itſelf into Day, and with the general Reſort and Confluence of all Ranks of Men, both Magiſtrates and People. This Cuſtom of Lights at that time was, if not begun, at leaſt much augmented by *Conſtantine*, who ſet up Lamps and Torches in all Places, as well within the Church as without; that thro' the whole City the Night ſeemed to outvye the Sun at Noon-day. And this they did (as *Nazianzen* intimates) as a *Prodromus* or Forerunner of that great Light, even the *Son of Righteouſneſs*, which the next day aroſe upon the World. For the *Feaſt* itſelf, the ſame Father calls it the holy and famous *Paſſover*, a Day which is the *Queen* of Days, the *Feſtival* of *Feſtivals*, and which as far excels all others, even of thoſe which are inſtituted to the Honour of *Chriſt*, as the *Sun* goes beyond the other *Stars*. A Time it was, famous for Works of *Mercy* and *Charity*, every one both of *Clergy* and *Laity* ſtriving to contribute liberally to the Poor; a Duty (as one of the *Ancients* obſerves) very congruous and ſuitable to that happy Seaſon; for what more fit, than that ſuch as beg Relief ſhould be enabled to rejoice at that time, when we remember the common Fountain of our Mercies? Therefore no ſooner did the Morning of this day appear, but *Conſtantine* uſed to ariſe, and in Imitation of the Love and Kindneſs of our bleſſed *Saviour*, to beſtow the richeſt and moſt noble Gifts, and to diffuſe the Influences of his Bounty over all Parts of his Empire. And his Example herein, it ſeems, was follow'd by moſt of his Succeſſors, who uſed upon this Solemnity by their Imperial Orders to releaſe all *Priſoners*, unleſs ſuch as were there for more heavy and notorious Crimes, High-Treaſon, Murders, Rapes, Inceſt, and the like. And *Chryſoſtom* tells us of a Letter of *Theodoſius* the Great, ſent at this time throughout the Empire, wherein he did not only command, that all

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Euſeb. de vit. Conſt. l. 4. c. 22. p. 536.

Ib. p. 677.

Ib. & Orat. 19. p. 304.

Commod. inſtruct. c. 75. p. 57.

Euſeb. ut ſupra.

Hom. 20. ad pop. Antioch. p. 230. tom. 1.

Part I. all Priſoners ſhould be releaſed and pardon'd, but wiſh'd he was able to recal thoſe that were already executed, and to reſtore them to Life again. And becauſe by the Negligence and Remiſneſs of Meſſengers, or any Accident, thoſe Imperial Letters might ſometimes happen to come too late, therefore *Valentinian* the younger provided by a ſtanding Law, That whether Order came or not, the Judges ſhould diſpence the accuſtomed Indulgence, and upon *Eaſter*-Day in the Morning cauſe all Priſons to be open'd, the Chains to be knock'd off, and the Perſons ſet at Liberty.

Lib. 9. Theod. tit. 38. de indulg. l. 8.

The next Feaſt conſiderable in thoſe Primitive Times, was that of Whit-Sunday, or *Pentecoſt*; a Feaſt of great Eminency amongſt the *Jews*, in Memory of the Law deliver'd on Mount *Sinai* at that time, and for the gathering and bringing in of their *Harveſt*; and of no leſs Note amongſt *Chriſtians*, for the *Holy Ghoſt's* deſcending upon the *Apoſtles* and other *Chriſtians*, in the viſible Appearance of *fiery cloven Tongues*, which happen'd upon that Day, and thoſe miraculous Powers that were conferr'd upon them. It was obſerved with the ſame reſpect to *Eaſter*, that the *Jews* did with reſpect to their *Paſſover*, *viz.* (as the Word imports) juſt *fifty Days* after it, reckoning from the ſecond Day of that Feſtival. It ſeems to ſome to have commenced from the firſt Riſe of Chriſtianity, not only becauſe the *Apoſtles* and the Church were aſſembled upon that Day, but becauſe S. *Paul* made ſo much Haſte to be at *Jeruſalem* the Day of *Pentecoſt*, which they underſtand of his great Deſire to keep it there as a *Chriſtian Feaſt*. But the Argument ſeems to me no way concluſive; for the Apoſtle might deſire to be there at that time, both becauſe he was ſure to meet with a great Number of the Brethren, and becauſe he ſhould have a fitter Opportunity to preach the Goſpel to the

Acts 20. 16.

the *Jews*, who from all parts flock'd thither, to the Feast, as our Saviour himself for the same Reason used to go up to *Jerusalem* at all their great and solemn Feasts. But however this was, 'tis certain the Observation of it is ancient; 'twas mention'd by *Irenæus*, in a Book which he wrote concerning *Easter*, as the Author of the *Questions* and *Responses* in *J. Martyr* tells us, by *Tertullian*, and after him by *Origen* more than once. This Feast is by us styled *Whitsunday*, partly because of those vast Diffusions of *Light* and *Knowledge* which upon this Day were shed upon the *Apostles*, in order to the *enlightning* of the World; but principally because this (as also *Easter*) being the stated Time for *Baptism* in the ancient Church, those who were baptized put on *white Garments*, in token of that *pure* and *innocent* Course of Life they had now engaged in, (of which more in its proper Place.) This white Garment they wore till the next *Sunday* after, and then laid it aside; whence the *Octave*, or *Sunday* after *Easter* came to be styled *Dominica in Albis*, the *Sunday in White*; it being then that the new Baptized put off their white Garments. We may observe, that in the Writers of those times, the *whole space of fifty Days* between *Easter* and *Whitsunday* goes often under the Name of *Pentecost*, and was in a manner accounted Festival, as * *Tertullian* informs us; and the forty third *Canon* of the *Illiberitan* Council seems to intimate. During this whole time Baptism was conferr'd, all Fasts were suspended and counted unlawful; they prayed standing, as they did every Lord's-day; and at this time read over *the Acts of the Apostles*, wherein their Sufferings and Miracles are recorded, as we learn from a Law of the younger † *Theodosius*, wherein this Custom is mention'd, and more plainly from S. *Chrysostom*, who treats of it in an *Homily* on purpose; where he gives this Reason why that Book,

Chap. 7.

Quæst. 115. *Tert.* *de Idol. c.* 14. *p* 94. *Adv. Cels.* *l.* 8. *p.* 392.

* *Tert. de Idol. c.* 14. *Bapt. c.* 19. *de Cor. Mil. c.* 3. *Vid. Max. Taurin. Homil.* 3. *de S. Pentec. p.* 223.

† *Co. Th. l.* 15. *tit.* 5. *l.* 5. *Serm.* 73. *Cur. Act. App. legantur in Pentec. tom.* 5.

Part I. which contain'd those Actions of the Apostles, which were done after *Pentecost*, should yet be read before it, whenas at all other times, those Parts of the Gospel were read which were proper to the Season; because the Apostles Miracles being the grand *Confirmation* of the Truth of Christ's *Resurrection*, and those Miracles recorded in that Book, it was therefore most proper to be read next to the Feast of the Resurrection.

Epiphany succeeds: This Word was of old promiscuously used, either for the Feast of Christ's *Nativity*, or for that which we now properly call by that Name. Afterwards the Titles became distinct; that of Christ's *Birth* (or, as we now term it, CHRISTMAS-DAY) was called γενέθλια, the *Nativity*, and Θεοφάνιας the *Appearance of God in the Flesh*; two Names importing the same thing, as *Nazianzen* notes. For the Antiquity of it, the first Footsteps I find of it are in the second Century, tho' I doubt not but it might be celebrated before, mention'd by *Theophilus* Bishop of *Cæsarea*, about the time of the Emperor *Commodus*. But if any Credit might be given to the *Decretal* Epistles, it was somewhat elder than that; *Telesphorus*, who lived under *Antoninus Pius*, ordaining Divine Service to be celebrated, and an Angelical Hymn to be sung the Night before the *Nativity* of our *Saviour*. However, that it was kept before the Times of *Constantine*, we have this sad instance: That when the Persecution raged under *Diocletian*, who then kept his Court at *Nicomedia*, amongst other Acts of barbarous Cruelty done there, finding Multitudes of *Christians* young and old met together, in the Temple, upon the day of *Christ's Nativity*, to celebrate that Festival, he commanded the Church-doors to be shut up, and Fire to be put to it: which in a short time reduced them and the Church to Ashes. I shall not dispute whether it was

Εἰς τὰ Θεοφάνια, *Orat.* 38. *p.* 613.

Decret. Telesph. sect. Nocte vero. Niceph. H. Eccl. l. 7. *c.* 6. *p.* 446. *Forsan ex Sim. Metaphras. qui ead. habet in Martyr. Ind. & Dom. apud Sur. ad* 26. *Dec. tom.* 6.

was always observed upon the same Day that we keep it now, the 25*th of December*; it seems probable that for a long time in the *East* it was kept in *January*, under the Name, and at the general time of the *Epiphania*; till receiving more Light in the Case from the Churches of the *West*, they changed it to this Day. Sure I am, S. *Chrysostom* in an Homily on purpose about this very thing affirms, That it was not above ten Years since in that Church (*i. e. Antioch*) it began first to be observed upon that day, and there offers several Reasons to prove that to be the true day of Christ's Nativity. Chap. 7. *Serm.* 31. *to.* 5. *p.* 417.

The Feast of *Epiphany*, properly so called, was kept on the *sixth of January*, and had that Name from a threefold *Apparition* or Manifestation commemorated upon that Day; which all happen'd, tho' not in the same Year, yet upon the same Day of the Year. The first was the *Appearance* of the *Star*, which guided the Wise Men to Christ. The second was the famous *Appearance* at the *Baptism of Christ*, when all the Persons in the Holy *Trinity* did sensibly manifest themselves; the *Father* in the *Voice* from Heaven, the *Son* in the River *Jordan*, and the *Holy Ghost* in the visible Shape of a *Dove*. This was ever accounted a famous Festival, and as S. *Chrysostom* tells us, was properly called *Epiphany*, because he came in a manner into the World *incognito*; but at his Baptism openly appear'd to be the Son of God, and was so declared before the World. At this time it was, that by his *going into the River Jordan, he did sanctify Water to the mystical washing away of Sin*, (as our Church expresses it) in memory whereof, *Chrysostom* tells us, they used in this Solemnity at Midnight to draw Water, which they looked upon as *consecrated* this day, and carrying it home to lay it up, where it would remain pure and uncorrupt for a whole Year, sometimes two or three Years together; the Truth *Hom.* 23. *de Bapt. Chr. tom.* 1. *p.* 278. *Ibid.*

Part I. whereof must rest upon the Credit of that good Man. The third *Manifestation* commemorated at this time, was that of Christ's *Divinity*, which appeared in the first Miracle that he wrought in *turning Water into Wine*; therefore 'twas called *Bethphania*, because it was done in the *House*, at that famous Marriage in *Cana of Galilee*, which our Saviour honour'd with his own Presence. All these three Appearances contributed to the Solemnity of this Festival.

But besides these, there was another sort of Festivals in the Primitive Church kept in Commemoration of *Martyrs*. For the understanding of which, we are to know, That in those sad and bloody Times, when the Christian Religion triumph'd over Persecution, and gain'd upon the World by nothing more than the constant and resolute Sufferings of its Professors, whom no Threatnings or Torments could baffle out of it; the People generally had a vast Reverence for those who suffer'd thus deep in the Cause of *Christianity*, and laid down their Lives for the Confirmation of it. They looked upon *Confessors* and *Martyrs*, as the great *Champions* of their Religion, who *resisted unto Blood*, and died upon the Spot to make good its Ground, and to maintain its Honour and Reputation; and therefore thought it very reasonable to do all possible Honour to their Memories, partly that others might be encouraged to the like Patience and Fortitude, and partly that Vertue even in this World might not lose its Reward. Hence they were wont once a Year to meet at the *Graves of Martyrs*, there solemnly to recite their Sufferings and their Triumphs, to praise their Vertues, and to bless God for their pious Examples, for their Holy Lives, and their happy Deaths, for their Palms and Crowns. These Anniversary Solemnities were called *Memoriæ Martyrum, the Memories of the Martyrs*; a Title

mention'd

mention'd by *Cyprian*, but certainly much older than his Time; and indeed when they were first taken up in the Church, is I think not so exactly known. The first that I remember to have met with, is that of *Polycarp* (whose Martyrdom is placed by *Eusebius*, *Ann.* 168, under the third Persecution) concerning whose Death and Sufferings the Church of *Smyrna* (of which he was Bishop) giving an Account to the Church of *Philomelium*, and especially of the Place where they had honourably entomb'd his Bones; they do profess that (so far as the Malice of their Enemies would permit them, and they pray'd God nothing might hinder it) they would assemble in that Place, and celebrate the *Birth-day* of his Martyrdom with Joy and Gladness. Where we may especially observe, That this Solemnity is styled his *Birth-day*; and indeed so the Primitive Christians used to call the Days of their Death and Passion, (quite contrary to the Manner of the *Gentiles*, who kept the *Natalitials* of their famous Men) looking upon these as the true Days of their Nativity, wherein they were freed from this Valley of Tears, these Regions of Death, and *born again* unto the Joys and Happiness of an endless Life. The same Account *Origen* gives (if that Book be his, a very ancient Author however:) We keep (says he) the Memories of the Saints, of our Ancestors and Friends that die in the Faith, both rejoicing in that Rest which they have obtain'd, and begging for ourselves a pious *Consummation* in the Faith. And we celebrate not the Day of their *Nativity*, as being the *Inlet* to Sorrow and Temptation; but of their *Death*, as the *Period* of their Miseries, and that which sets them beyond the Reach of Temptations. And this we do, both *Clergy* and *People* meeting together, inviting the Poor and Needy, and refreshing the Widows and the Orphans; that so our Festival may be, both

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Epist. 37. *p.* 51.

Euf. Chron. ad An. 168.

Euf. Hist. Eccl. l. 4. *c.* 15. *p.* 135.

Exposf. in Joh. l. 3. *fol.* 39. *tom.* 2.

Part. I. in respect of them whom we commemorate, the Memorial of that happy Rest which their departed Souls do enjoy; and is in respect of *us the Odour of a sweet Smell* in the Sight of God. Under *Constantine* these Days were commanded to be observed with great Care and Strictness, enjoining all his *Lieutenants* and Governors of Provinces to see the *Memorials* of the *Martyrs* duly honour'd. And so sacred were they accounted in those days, that it was thought a piece of Prophaneness to be absent from them: Therefore S. *Basil* thought he could not use a more solemn Argument to persuade a certain Bishop to come over to him upon this Occasion, than to adjure him by the Respect he bore to the *Memories* of the Martyrs, That if he would not do it for his, yet he should for their sakes, towards whom it was unfit he should shew the least Disregard. Hence it is, that *Libanius* sometimes takes notice of the *Christians* under no other Character than this, *Enemies to the Gods*, τὺς θεὺς τὺς τάφυς, *that haunt and frequent Tombs and Sepulchres.* For the *Time* of these Assemblies, it was commonly *once a Year*, *viz.* upon the day of their Martyrdom; for which end they took particular Care to keep *Registers* of the Days of the Martyrs Passions. So *Cyprian* expresly charges his *Clergy* to note down the Days of their Decease, that there might be a Commemoration of them amongst the *Memories* of the Martyrs. *Theodoret* tells us, That in his time they did not thus assemble once or twice, or five times in a year, but kept *frequent* Memorials oftentimes, every day celebrating the Memorials of Martyrs with Hymns and Praises unto God. But I suppose he means it of Days appointed to the Memory of *particular* Martyrs, which being then very numerous, their Memorials were distinctly fixed upon their proper days; the Festival of S. *Peter* or S. *Paul*, *Thomas*, *Sergius*, *Marcellus*, *&c.* as he there enumerates them. For the *Places*, these Solemnities were kept

De vita Const. l.4. c.23.p.536.

Epist. 336. to.3.p.328.

Apologet. pro doctr. sua, p.592.

Loco supra annot.

De Cur. Grac. affect. Serm. 8. de Martyrib. p.1. c.121.

kept at first at the *Tombs* where the *Martyrs* had been buried, which usually were in the *Cœmeteria* or Church-Yards, distinct in those times from their Places of Publick Worship, and at a great Distance from them, as being commonly without the Cities. Here their Burying-Places were in large *Cryptæ* or *Grots* under Ground, where they celebrated these Memorials, and whither they used to retire for their common Devotions in times of great Persecution, when their Churches were destroyed or taken from them. And therefore when *Æmelian*, the Governor of *Ægypt* under the Reign of *Valerian*, would skrew up the Persecution against *Christians*, he forbad their Meetings, and that they should not so much as assemble in the Places which they called their *Church-Yards*; the same Privilege which *Maximinus* also had taken from them. By reason of the Darkness of these Places, and their frequent assembling there in the *Night*, to avoid the Fury of their Enemies, they were forced to use *Lights* and *Lamps* in their publick Meetings; but they who make this an Argument to patronize their burning of Lamps and Wax-Candles in their Churches at Noon-day, (as 'tis in all the great Churches of the *Roman* Communion) talk at a strange Rate of wild Inconsequence. I am sure S. *Hierom*, when charged with it, denied that they used any in the Day-time, and never but at Night when they rose up to their Night-Devotions. He confesses indeed, 'twas otherwise in the *Eastern* Churches, where when the *Gospel* was to be read, they set up Lights as a Token of their *Rejoicing* for those happy and glad Tydings that were contained in it, *Light* having been ever used as a Symbol and Representation of *Joy* and *Gladness*; a Custom probably not much elder than his time. Afterwards when *Christianity* prevailed in the World, the Devotion of *Christians* erected Churches in those Places; the Temples of the Mar-

Chap. 7.

Euſ. Hiſt. l. 7. c. 11. p. 258.

l. 9. c. 2. p. 349.

Adv. Vigilant. tom. 2. p. 123.

Part I. Martyrs (says *Theodoret*) being *spacious* and *beautiful*, richly and curiously adorned, and shining with great Lustre and Brightness. These Solemnities, as the same Author informs us, were kept not like the Heathen Festivals, with *Luxury* and *Obscureness*, but with *Devotion* and *Sobriety*, with Divine *Hymns* and Religious *Sermons*, with fervent *Prayers* to God, mixed many times with Sighs and Tears. Here they heard Sermons and Orations, joined in publick Prayers and Praises, received the Holy Sacrament, offered Gifts and Charities for the Poor, recited the Names of the Martyrs then commemorated with their due Elogies and Commendations, and their Vertues propounded to the Imitation of the Hearers. For which purpose they had their set *Notaries*, who took the *Acts*, *Sayings*, and *Sufferings* of *Martyrs*, which were after *compiled* into particular *Treatises*, and were recited in these annual Meetings; and this was the first Original of *Martyrologies* in the Christian Church. From this Custom of offering up Prayers, Praises and Alms at those times, it is, that the Fathers speak so often of *Oblations* and *Sacrifices* at the Martyrs Festivals. *Tertullian*, *Often upon an anniversary Day* (says he) *we make Oblations for them that are departed, in memory of the* Natalia *or Birth-days*; and to the same Purpose elsewhere. *As oft* (says Cyprian) *as by an anniversary Commemoration we celebrate the Passion-days of the Martyrs, we always offer Sacrifices for them*: And the same Phrases oft occur in many others of the Fathers. By which 'tis evident, they meant no more than their publick *Prayers*, and offering up *Praises* to God for the Piety and Constancy, and the excellent Examples of their Martyrs, their celebrating the *Eucharist* at these times, as the *Commemoration* of Christ's *Sacrifice*, their Oblation of *Alms* and Charity for the Poor every one of which truly may, and often is styled a *Sacrifice* or *Oblation*; and

Ibid.

Vide Const. Ap. l. 8. c. 45. p. 1040. *Vid. Epiph. λόγ. σύντομ. περπίς, p. 466.*

De Cor. mil. c. 3. p. 102. *De exhort. Castil. p. 523. De monog. p. 531. Epist. 34. p. 48. & Ep. 37.*

and are so understood by some of the more moderate even of the *Romish* Church: And with good Reason; for that they did not make any real and formal *Sacrifices* and *Oblations* to Martyrs, but only *honour* them as *holy Men*, and *Friends to God*, who for his and our Saviour's Honour, and the Truth of Religion, chose to lay down their Lives, I find expressly affirmed by *Theodoret*. Chap. 7. *Rigalt. Obs. ad Cypr. H. Vales. annot. ad Euf. Hist. annot. p. 262. Pichael de missa. p. 103, 107. Loco supra cit. p. 116.*

These Festivals being Times of Mirth and Gladness, were celebrated with great Expressions of Love and Charity to the Poor, and mutual Rejoicing with one another. Here they had their συμπόσια, or *Feasts*, every one bringing something to the *common* Banquet, out of which the Poor also had their Share. These Feasts at first were very sober and temperate, and such as became the Modesty and Simplicity of Christians, as we heard before out of *Theodoret*, and is affirmed before him by *Constantine*, in his *Oration* to the *Saints*. But degenerating afterwards into Excess and Intemperance, they were every where declaimed against by the Fathers, till they were wholly laid aside. Upon the Account of these Feasts, and for the better making Provisions for them, we may conceive it was, that *Markets* came to be kept at these Times and Places; for of such S. *Basil* speaks, ἀγοραὶ ἐν τοῖς μαρτυρίοις γινόμεναι, *Markets held at the Memorials and Tombs of Martyrs*: These he condemns as highly *unsutable* to those Solemnities, which were only instituted for Prayers, and a Commemoration of the Vertues of good Men, for our Encouragement and Imitation; and that they ought to remember the Severity of our otherwise meek and humble Saviour, who whip'd the *Buyers* and *Sellers* out of the *Temple*, when by their Marketings they had turned the *House of Prayer into a Den of Thieves*. And the Truth is, these Anniversary Commemorations, though in their Primitive Institution they are highly reasonable *Cap. 12. p. 585. Reg. fus. disput. interro. 40. tom. 28. p. 589.*

Part I. ſonable and commendable; yet through the Folly and Dotage of Men, they were after made to miniſter to great Superſtition and Idolatry: So plain is it, that the beſt and uſefulleſt things may be corrupted to bad Purpoſes: For hence ſprung the Doctrine and Practice of *Prayer and Invocation of Saints*, and their *Interceſſion* with God, their worſhipping of *Reliques*, *Pilgrimages*, and *viſiting Churches*, and offering at the *Shrines* of ſuch and ſuch Saints, and ſuch like Superſtitious Practices, which in After-Ages over-run ſo great a Part of the Chriſtian Church; things utterly unknown to the Simplicity of thoſe purer and better Times.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Perſons conſtituting the Body of the Church, both People and Miniſters.

The People diſtinguiſh'd into ſeveral Ranks. Catechumens of two Sorts, gradually inſtructed in the Principles of the Chriſtian Faith. Accounted only Chriſtians at large. The more recondite Myſteries of Chriſtianity concealed from Perſons till after Baptiſm. Three Reaſons aſſigned of it. How long they remained in the State of Catecumens. The ſeveral Claſſes of Penitents, the προσκλαίοντες, ἀκροώμενοι, ὑποπίπτοντες, συνιςάμενοι, *the* πιςοί, *or the Faithful. Their particular Stations in the Church. Their great Reverence for the Lord's Supper. The Clergy why called* κλῆρος. *Of two Sorts; the higheſt Biſhops, Preſbyters, and Deacons. Biſhops, as ſuperior to Preſbyters, how ancient by the moſt learned Oppoſers of Epiſcopacy. Their Office and Privi-*

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lege above Presbyters. The περιοδευταὶ or Visitors in every Dioceſs. Of Metropolitans, what their Power and Authority above ordinary Biſhops; their Antiquity. Of Patriarchs, and in what reſpects ſuperiour to Metropolitans and Archbiſhops. An Account of conforming the external Juriſdiction of the Church to the Civil Government of the Roman Empire. Preſbyters, their Place and Duty. Whether they preached in the Preſence of the Biſhop. Deacons, their Inſtitution, Office, Number. The Archdeacon. Of inferior Orders. The Subdeacon. The Acolythus. The Exorciſt. The Reader. The Doorkeeper. What the Nature of their ſeveral Places. Ordination to theſe Offices how managed. The People preſent at, and conſenting to the Ordination. Sacerdotes prædicari, what. The Chriſtian Diſcipline in this Caſe imitated by the Emperor Severus, in appointing Civil Officers. Great Trials and Teſtimonials to be had of Perſons to be ordained. Clergy-Men to riſe by Degrees. The Age uſually required in thoſe that were to be promoted to the ſeveral Orders. Of Deaconneſſes, their Antiquity, Age, and Office. The great Honour and Reſpect ſhewed to Biſhops and Miniſters. Looked upon as Common Parents. Nothing of Moment done without their Leave. Their Welcome, and the Honour done them wherever they came. This made good by ſeveral Inſtances; Biſhops inveſted with Power to determine Civil

Chap. 8.

Part I.

Civil Controversies. The Plentiful Provision made for them. The great Privileges and Immunities granted by Constantine *and his Successors to the Bishops and Clergy, noted out of the* Theodosian Code.

FROM the Consideration of *Time* and *Place*, we proceed to consider the *PERSONS* that constituted and made up their Religious Assemblies; and they were either the *Body of the People*, or those who were peculiarly *consecrated* and set apart for the Pubick Ministrations of Religion. For the Body of the People, we may observe, that as *Christianity* at first generally gained Admission in great Towns and Cities, so all the *Believers* of that Place usually assembled and met together, the *Christians* also of the neighbouring Villages resorting thither at Times of Publick Worship. But Religion increasing apace, the Publick Assembly, especially in the greater Cities, quickly began to be too vast and numerous to be manag'd with any Order and Conveniency; and therefore they were forced to divide the *Body* into particular *Congregations*, who had their *Pastors* and Spiritual Guides set over them, but still were under the Superintendency and Care of him that was their *President* or *Bishop* of the Place. And according as the Church could form and establish its Discipline, the People either according to their *Seniority* and Improvement, or according to the *Quality* of the present Condition they were under, began to be distinguish'd into several Ranks and * *Classes*, which had their distinct Places in the Church, and their gradual Admissions to the several Parts of the Publick Worship. The first were the CATECHUMENS; and of these were two Sorts, the τελειότεροι, or more *perfect*, such as had been *Catechumens* of some

* *Balsam. Zonar. Aristen. in Can. 5. Conc. Neo. Cæsar.*

some considerable standing, and were even ripe for Baptism; these might stay not only the Reading of the Scriptures, but to the very last Part of the first Service. The others were the ἀτελέστεροι, the more rude and *imperfect*, who stood only amongst the *Hearers*, and were to depart the Congregation as soon as the *Lessons* were read: These were as yet accounted *Heathens*, who applied themselves to the Christian Faith, and were *catechized* and instructed in the more plain Grounds of Religion. These Principles were gradually deliver'd to them, according as they became capable to receive them; first the more plain, and then the more difficult. Indeed they were very shy of imparting the Kowledge of the more recondite Doctrines of *Christianity* to any till after Baptism. So S. *Cyprian* expresly assures us, where speaking to the *Illuminate* or Baptized; If during the Catechetical Exercise (says he) a *Catechumen* shall ask thee, what that means which the Preachers say? tell him not, for he is yet without; and these *Mysteries* are delivered to thee only. The weak Understanding of a *Catechumen* being no more able to bear such sublime *Mysteries*, than a sick Man's Head can large and immoderate Draughts of Wine. And at the End of his *Preface* he has this Note; *These Catechetical Discourses may be read by those that are to be Baptized, or the Faithful already baptized: But to Catechumens, or such as are no Christians, thou may'st not impart them; for if thou dost, expect to give an Account to God.*

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Præf. ad Catech. Illum. p. 13.

Ib. p. 21.

S. *Basil*, discoursing of the Rites and Institutions of *Christianity*, divides them into two Parts, the τὰ κηρύγματα, and the τὰ δόγματα The τὰ κηρύγματα were those Parts of Religion which might δημοσιεύεσθαι, be familiarly Preached and Expounded to the People: The τὰ δόγματα were the

De Spir. S. c. 27. p. 532. tom. 2.

Part I. the ſublime and hidden Doctrines and Parts of the Chriſtian Faith; and theſe were ἀπόῤῥητα, things not raſhly and commonly to be divulged, but to be lock'd up in Silence. Of this Nature were the Doctrines of the *Trinity* and *Hypoſtatick Union*, and ſuch like; eſpecially of the two *Sacraments*, *Baptiſm* and the *Lord's Supper*. For though they acquainted their yonng Hearers with ſo much of them as was neceſſary to ſtir up their Deſires, yet as to the Main of the Things themſelves, the Sacramental *Symbols*, the *Manner* of their Celebration, the *Modus* of the Divine Preſence at the Holy *Euchariſt*, the Meaning of all thoſe *Myſtical* Rites and Ceremonies that were uſed about them; theſe were carefully concealed both from *Strangers* and *Catechumens*, and communicated only to thoſe who were ſolemnly initiated and baptized. Hence that ancient *Form* ſo common in the Sermons and Writings of the Fathers, whereby, when accidentally diſcourſing before the People of any of theſe Myſterious Parts of Religion, they uſed to fetch themſelves off with an ΙΣ ΑΣΙΝ ΟΙ ΜΕΜΥΗΜΕΝΟΙ, *Thoſe that are initiated know what is ſaid.* This was ſo uſual, that this Phraſe occurs at leaſt fifty times in the Writings of S. *Chryſoſtom* only, as *Caſaubon* hath obſerved; who has likewiſe noted Three Reaſons out of the *Fathers* why they ſo ſtudiouſly concealed theſe Parts of their Religion. *Firſt*, the Nature of the things themſelves, ſo ſublime and remote from vulgar Apprehenſions, that they would ſignify little to *Pagans* or *Catechumens* not yet fully inſtructed and confirmed in the *Faith*; and would either be loſt upon them, or in Dander to be derided by them. *Secondly*, that hereby the *Catechumens* and younger Chriſtians might be inflamed with a greater Eagerneſs of Deſire to partake of the Myſteries and Privileges of the *Faithful*;

Vid. Dion. Areop. de Ecc. Hierarch. c. 1. p. 230.

Chryſ. Hom. 67. in Gen. p. 719. tom. 1. & alibi ſæpiſſ.

Iſid. Peluſ. l. 4. ep. 162. p. 82. aliique. Exercit. 16. ad Annal. Bar. S. 43. p. 556.

Faithful; Human Nature being desirous of nothing more than the Knowledge of what is kept and concealed from us. To help them forward in this, S. *Augustin* tells us, that in their publick Prayers they were wont to beg of God to inspire the *Catechumens* with a Desire of Baptismal Regeneration. The same Account *Chrysostom* gives us, this being Part of the Form used in their Publick Service, *Let us pray that the most gracious and merciful God would hear the Prayers of the Catechumens:* And what it was they prayed for, he presently adds, *viz. That they might no longer remain in that State.* Upon these Accounts, *Initiation* by Baptism, but especially *Admission* to the Lord's-Supper, is, amongst other Titles in the Writers of those Times, called *Desiderata*, because so earnestly desired and sought for by those that were not yet taken in. The Truth is, till Persons arrived at this State, they were not accounted *Christians* (or but in a large Sense, as *Candidates* that stood in order to it;) and therefore could not satisfy themselves either to *live* or *die* in that Condition, wherein they wanted the great *Seals* and *Pledges* of their Christianity. *Thirdly*, to beget in Mens Minds the higher Esteem and Veneration for these Religious Mysteries; nothing producing a greater *Contempt* even in Sacred things, than too much Openness and Familiarity. So that a little Obscurity and Concealment might seem necessary to vindicate them from Contempt, and secure the Majesty and Reverence that was due to them. This made the *Fathers* and *Seniors* of the Church (says S. *Basil*) in prescribing Rites and Laws, leave many things in the dark, behind the Veil and Curtain, that they might τὸ σεμνὸν τοῖς μυστηρίοις φυλάττειν, preserve the *Sacredness* and *Dignity* that was due to the Mysteries of Religion. For a thing (says he) cannot properly be said to be a *Mystery*, when 'tis once *exposed* to every vulgar

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Ad Vital. ep. 107. *col.* 493.

Hom. 2. *in cap.* 11. *ad Cor. p.* 740.

Vid. Chrys. ibid.

Loc. supra land.

Part I. and common Ear. But of this enough, if not too much.

And as they were careful to keep the higher Parts of Christianity within the Cognizance of the *Faithful*, so they were not less careful to teach and instruct the *Catechumens* in all those Principles they were capable of being taught. This at their first coming over was done privately, and at home, by Persons deputed on purpose to that Office by the Bishop (as *Balsamon* clearly intimates) till they were sufficiently instructed in the first and more intelligible Principles of the Faith. Then they were admitted into the Congregation, and suffered to be present at some Parts of the Divine Service, especially the *Sermons*, which were made for the building them up unto higher Measures of Knowledge; which being ended, they were commanded to *depart* the Church, not being suffered to be present at the more solemn Rites, especially the Celebration of the Lord's Supper. And in this manner they were trained up, till they were initiated by Baptism, and taken into the highest Form of *Christians*. How long Persons remained in the State of the *Catechumens*, is difficult to determine; it not being always nor in all Places alike, but longer in some, and shorter in others, and probably according to the Capacity of the Persons. The *Apostolical Constitutions* appoint *three Years* for the *Catechumen* to be instructed, but provide withal, that if any one be diligent and vertuous, and have a Ripeness of Understanding for the thing, he may be admitted into Baptism sooner; for (say they) not the *Space* of Time, but the *Fitness* and *Manners* of Men, are to be regarded in this matter.

In Can. 26. Conc. Laod.

Lib. 8. c. 32. p. 1032.

Epist. Canon. περὶ τῆς εἰδωλοθ. φαγ. Can. 11. p. 121.

The next Sort were the *Penitents*, such as for some Misdemeanors were under the Censures and Severity of the Church, and were gradually to obtain Absolution from it. Of these there were several

ral Degrees, five especially mentioned by S. *Gregory* of *Neocæsarea*, who lived about the Year 250. The first were the οἱ προσκλαίοντες, such as *wept* and *lamented*, and were rather Candidates to be received into the Orders of *Penitents*, than *Penitents* properly so called. These usually stood in a squalid and mournful Habit at the *Church-Porch*, with Tears and great Importunity begging of the *Faithful* as they went in, to pray for them. Chap. 8.

The second were the ἀκροώμενοι, the *Hearers*, who were admitted to hear the Holy Scriptures read and expounded to the People. Their *Station* was at the upper End of the *Narthex*, or first Part of the Church, and were to depart the Congregation at the same time with the *Catechumens*. The third *Class* of *Penitents* was that of the ὑποπίπτοντες, the *Prostrate*, because Service being ended, they fell down before the Bishop; who, together with the Congregation, falling down and making Confession in their Behalf, after raised them up and laid his Hands upon them. These stood within the Body of the Church, next the *Pulpit* or *Reading-Pew*, and were to depart together with the *Catechumens*. The fourth were the συνιστάμενοι, the *Consistentes*, such as stay'd with the rest of the Congregation, and did not depart with the *Catechumens*; but after they and the other Penitents were gone out, stay'd and joined in Prayer and Singing (but not in receiving the Sacrament) with the Faithful. These after some time were advanced into the fifth and last *Order* of the *Communicantes* (μέθεξιν τῆς ἁγιασμάτων, S. *Gregory* calls it) and were admitted to the Participation of the Holy Sacrament. This was the State of the *Penitents* in the Primitive Church. Persons having fully passed through the State of the *Catechumenate*, became then immediate Candidates of Baptism, presented their *Names* to the Bishop, and humbly prostrating themselves, begged that they might be

Soz. Hist. Eccl. l. 7. c. 16. p. 727.

Part I. entred into the Church. These are called *Competentes*, because they did *competere gratiam Christi*, sue for the *Grace* of *Christ* conferr'd in Baptism. The last Rank was that of the πιστοὶ, or the *FAITHFUL*, who having been baptized and confirmed, and having approved themselves by the long Train and Course of a strict, pious Life, were then admitted to the Participation of the *Lord's Supper*; which, being the highest and most venerable Mystery of the *Christian Religion*, was not then rashly given to any, but to such only as had run through all other Degrees, and by a Course of Piety evidenced themselves to be such real and faithful *Christians*, as that the highest Mysteries and most solemn Parts of Religion might be committed to them. This was the highest Order, and looked upon with great Regard, and for any of this Rank to lapse and be *overtaken with a Fault*, cost them severer *Penances* than were imposed upon the inferior Forms of Christians.

This, in short, was the State of the *People*. But because 'tis not possible any Body or Community of Men should be regularly managed without some particular Persons to superintend, direct and govern the Affairs of the whole Society, therefore we are next to enquire what Persons there were in the Primitive Church, that were peculiarly *set apart* to steer its Affairs, and to attend upon the Publick Offices and Ministrations of it. That God always had a *peculiar* People, whom he selected for himself out of the rest of Mankind, is too evident to need any Proof: Such were the *Patriarchs*, and the *holy Seed* of old; such the *Jews*, chosen by him above all other Nations in the World. This was his κλῆρος, his particular Lot and Portion, comprehending the Body of the People in general. But afterwards this Title was confined to narrower Bounds, and became appropriate to that *Tribe* which God had made

made choice of to *ſtand before him*, to wait at his *Altar*, and to miniſter in the Services of his Worſhip. And after the *Expiration* of their *OEconomy*, was accordingly uſed to denote the *Miniſtry of the Goſpel*, the Perſons peculiarly conſecrated and devoted to the Service of God in the Chriſtian Church: The Clergy being thoſe, *qui divino cultui miniſteria religionis impendunt* (as they are defined in a Law of the Emperor *Conſtantine*) who are ſet apart for the *Miniſteries* of Religion in Matters relating to the *Divine Worſhip*. Now the whole κλῆρος & ἱερατικὸς (as 'tis often called in the *Apoſtles Canons*) the *Roll* of the *Clergy* of the ancient Church (taking it within the Compaſs of its firſt four hundred Years) conſiſted of *two Sorts* of Perſons, the ἱερατικοί, who were peculiarly conſecrated to the more *proper* and *immediate* Acts of the Worſhip of God: And the ὑπηρέται, ſuch as were ſet apart only for the *more mean and common* Services of the Church. Of the firſt Sort were theſe three, *Biſhops*, *Presbyters*, and *Deacons*. Chap. 8

C. Th. l. 16. tit. 3. de Epiſc. Eccl. & Cler. l. 2.

The firſt and principal Officer of the Church was the Preſident, or BISHOP, uſually choſen out of the *Presbyters*. I ſhall not here concern myſelf in the Diſputes, whether *Epiſcopacy*, as a ſuperiour *Order* to *Presbytery*, was of Divine Inſtitution (a Controverſy ſufficiently ventilated in the late Times) it being enough to my Purpoſe, what is acknowledged both by *Blondel* and *Salmaſius*, the moſt learned Defenders of *Presbytery*, that Biſhops were diſtinct from and ſuperiour to *Presbyters* in the ſecond *Century*, or the *next Age* to the Apoſtles. The main Work and Office of a Biſhop was to *teach* and *inſtruct* the People, to *adminiſter* the Sacraments, to *abſolve* Penitents, to *eject and excommunicate* obſtinate and incorrigible Offenders, to *preſide* in the Aſſemblies of the Clergy, to *ordain* inferiour Officers in the Church, to *call them to account*, and to *ſuſpend* or *deal* with them according to the Nature of the Offence;

Part I. to urge the *Observance* of Ecclesiastical Laws, and to appoint and institute such indifferent Rites as were for the decent and orderly Administration of his Church. In short, according to the Notation of his Name, he was a σκόπος, a *Watchman* and *Sentinel*, and therefore obliged ἐπισκοπεῖν, diligently and carefully to *inspect* and *observe*, to superintend and provide for those that were under his Charge. This, *Zonaras* tells us, was implied in the Bishop's *Throne* being placed on *high*, in the most eminent Part of the Church, to denote how much 'twas his Duty from thence to overlook, and very diligently to observe the People that were under him. These and many more were the unquestionable Rights and Duties of the Episcopal Office; which because it was very difficult and troublesome for one Man to discharge, especially where the παροικία, or *Diocess* (as we now call it) was any thing large, therefore upon the multiplying of Country-Churches, it was thought fit to take in a *subordinate* Sort of *Bishops*, called *Chorepiscopi*, *Country*, or (as amongst us they have been called) *Suffragan Bishops*; whose Business it was to *superintend* and inspect the Churches in the *Country*, that lay more remote from the City where the Episcopal See was, and which the Bishop could not always inspect and oversee in his own Person. These were the *Vicarii Episcoporum* (as they are called in *Isidore*'s Version of the thirteenth *Canon* both of the *Ancyran* and *Neocæsarean Council*) the Bishops *Deputies*, chosen out of the fittest and gravest Persons. In the *Canon* of the last mention'd Council, they are said to be chosen *in Imitation* of the Seventy, not the *Seventy Elders* which *Moses* took in to bear Part of the Government (as some have *glossed* the Words of that *Canon*) but of the *Seventy Disciples*, whom our Lord made choice of, to send up and down the Countries to preach the *Gospel*, as both *Zonaras* and *Balsamon* understood it:

In Can. Apost. Can. 58.

And

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And thereupon, by reaſon of their great Care and Pains, are commanded to be eſteemed very *honourable*. Their Authority was much greater than that of the *Presbyters*, and yet much inferior to the *Biſhop*. Biſhops really they were, though their Power confined within narrow Limits; they were not allowed to ordain either *Presbyters* or *Deacons* (unleſs peculiarly licenſed to it by the Biſhop of the *Dioceſs*) though they might ordain *Subdeacons*, *Readers*, and any inferior Officers under them. They were to be *aſſiſtant* to the Biſhop, might be preſent at *Synods* and *Councils* (to many whereof we find their Subſcriptions) and had Power to give *Letters of Peace*, *i. e.* ſuch Letters whereby the Biſhop of one *Dioceſs* was wont to recommend any of his Clergy to the Biſhop of another, that ſo a fair Underſtanding and Correſpondence might be maintained between them; a Privilege expreſly denied to any *Preſbyter* whatſoever. But leſt this wandring Employment of the *Chorepiſcopi* ſhould reflect any Diſhonour upon the Epiſcopal Office, there were certain *Presbyters* appointed in their room, called περιοδευταὶ, or *Viſitors*, often mentioned in the ancient *Canons* and *Acts* of Councils; who being tied to no certain Place, were to go up and down the Country, to obſerve and correct what was amiſs. And theſe doubtleſs were thoſe ἐπιχώριοι Πρεσβύτεροι, (ſpoken of in the thirteenth *Canon* of the *Neocæſarean* Council) thoſe *rural Presbyters*, who are there forbid to conſecrate the *Euchariſt* in the *City-Church*, in the Preſence of the *Biſhop* of the *Presbyters* of the City.

Conc. Antioch. Can. 10.

Ib. Can. 8.

Conc. Lao. Can. 57.

As *Chriſtianity* increaſed and overſpread all Parts, and eſpecially the Cities of the Empire, it was found neceſſary yet farther to enlarge the Epiſcopal Office; and as there was commonly a Biſhop in every *great City*, ſo in the *Metropolis* (as the *Romans* called it) the *Mother-City* of every *Province* wherein they had Courts of civil Judicature) there

Part I. was an ARCH-BISHOP or a METROPOLITAN, who had Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction over all the Churches within that Province. He was superiour to all the Bishops within those Limits; to him it belonged either to *ordain* or to *ratify* the Elections and Ordinations of all the Bishops within his Province, insomuch that without his Confirmation they were looked upon as null and void. Once at least every Year he was to summon the Bishops under him to a *Synod*, to inquire into and direct the Ecclesiastical Affairs within that Province, to inspect the Lives and Manners, the Opinions and Principles of his Bishops, to admonish, reprove, and suspend them that were disorderly and irregular: If any Controversies or Contentions happened between any of them, he was to have the *Hearing* and *Determination* of them; and indeed no Matter of *Moment* was done within the whole Province, without first consulting him in the Case. Besides this *Metropolitan*, there was many times another in the same Province, who enjoyed nothing but that Name and Title, his *Episcopal See* being by the Emperor's *Pragmatick* erected into the Dignity of a *Metropolis*. He was only an *Honorary Metropolitan*, without any real Power and Jurisdiction, and had no other Privilege, but that he took place above other ordinary Bishops; in all things else equally subject with them to the *Metropolitan* of the Province, as the Council of *Chalcedon* determines in this Case. When this Office of *Metropolitan* first began, I find not; only this we are sure of, that the Council of *Nice*, settling the just Rights and Privileges of *Metropolitan Bishops*, speaks of them as a Thing of *ancient* Date, ushering in the *Canon* with an ἀρχαῖα ἔθη κρατείτω, *Let ancient Customs still take Place.* The Original of the *Institution* seems to have been partly to comply with Peoples Occasions, who oft resorted

Can. 12.

Can. 6.

to

to the *Metropolis* for Dispatch of their Affairs, and so might fitly discharge their *Civil* and *Ecclesiastical* Concerns both at once; and partly because of the great Confluence of People to that City; that the Bishop of it might have Pre-eminence above the rest, and the Honour of the *Church* bear some Proportion to that of the *State*. Chap. 8. *Vid. Conc. Antioch. Can.* 9.

After this sprang up another *Branch* of the Episcopal Office, as much superior to that of *Metropolitans*, as theirs was to ordinary Bishops; these were called PRIMATES and PATRIARCHS, and had Jurisdiction over many Provinces. For the understanding of this, it's necessary to know, that when Christianity came to be fully settled in the World, they contrived to model the external Government of the Church, as near as might be to the Civil Government of the *Roman* Empire; the Parallel most exactly drawn by an ingenious Person of our own Nation; the Sum of it is this. The whole Empire of *Rome* was divided into *thirteen Dioceſſes* (so they called those Divisions) these contained about *one hundred and twenty Provinces*, and every Province several *Cities*. Now as in every City there was a temporal Magistrate for the executing of Justice, and keeping the Peace both for that City and the Towns round about it, so was there also a *Bishop* for Spiritual Order and Government, whose Jurisdiction was of like Extent and Latitude. In every Province there was a *Proconsul* or President, whose Seat was usually at the *Metropolis* or chief City of the Province; and hither all inferior Cities came for Judgment in Matters of Importance. And in proportion to this, there was in the same City an *Archbishop* or *Metropolitan*, for Matters of Ecclesiastical Concernment. Lastly, In every *Dioceſe*, the Emperors had their *Vicarii* or *Lieutenants*, who dwelt in the principal City of the *Dioceſe*, where all Imperial Edicts were publish'd, and

Edward Breerwood's *Patriarch. Governm. of the ancient Church Queſt.* 1.

Part I. and from whence they were sent abroad into the several Provinces, and where was the chief *Tribunal* where all Causes, not determinable elsewhere, were decided. And to answer this, there was in the same City a *Primate*, to whom the last Determination of all Appeals from all the Provinces in Differences of the *Clergy*, and the sovereign Care of all the Diocese for sundry Points of spiritual Government did belong. This, in short, is the Sum of the Account which that *learned* Man gives of this Matter. So that the *Patriarch*, as superior to the *Metropolitans*, was to have under his Jurisdiction not any one single Province, but a whole *Diocese* (in the old *Roman* Notion of that Word) consisting of many *Provinces*. To him belong'd the Ordination of all the *Metropolitans* that were under him, as also the summoning them to Councils, the *correcting* and reforming the Misdemeanours they were guilty of; and from his Judgment and Sentence, in things properly within his Cognizance, there lay no Appeal. To this I shall only add what *Salmasius* has noted, that as the *Dioces's* that was govern'd by the *Vicarius* had many *Provinces* under it, so the *Præfectus Prætorio* had several *Dioceses* under him: And in proportion to this, probable it was, that *Patriarchs* were first brought in, who if not superior to *Primates* in Jurisdiction and Power, were yet in *Honour*, by reason of the Dignity of those Cities where their *Sees* were fix'd, as at *Rome*, *Constantinople*, *Alexandria*, *Antioch* and *Jerusalem*; a Title and Dignity which they retain to this day.

The next Office to Bishops was that of Presbyters, to whom it belong'd to preach to the People, to administer Baptism, consecrate the Eucharist, and to be assistant to the Bishop both in publick Ministrations, and dispatching the Affairs of the Church. The Truth is, the *Presbyters* of every great City were a kind of *Ecclesiastical Senate*, under

under the Care and Precedency of the Bishop, whose Counsel and Assistance he made use of in ruling those Societies of Christians that were under his Charge and Government, and were accordingly reckon'd next in Place and Power to him: Thus described by S. *Gregory* in his *Iambics:* Chap. 8.

——οἱ τὰ δεύτερα
Θρόνων λελοχότες,
Λαῷ προήγοι Πρεσβύται,
Σεμνὴ γερουσία.

'Εις ἑαυτόν. Carm. 23. p. 244. Tom. 2.

The venerable Senate of Presbyters, that preside over the People, and possess the second Throne, i. e. the Place next to the Bishop. They are called *Clerici superioris loci*, and otherwhiles (unless we understand it of the *Chorepiscopi*) *Antistites in secundo ordine*; and accordingly in Churches had *Seats of Eminency* placed for them next to the Bishop's Throne. Whereby was imply'd (says *Zonaras*) that they ought to use a proportional Care and Providence towards the People, to inform and teach them, to direct and guide them, being appointed as *Fellow-labourers* with, and *Assistants* to the Bishop. But tho' Presbyters by their Ordination had a *Power* conferr'd upon them to administer Holy Things, yet after that the Church was settled upon Foundations of Order and Regularity, they did not usually exercise this Power within any *Diocess* without Leave and Authority from the *Bishop*, much less take upon them to preach in his Presence. This Custom (however it might be otherwise in the *Eastern* Church) we are sure was constantly observed in the Churches of *Africk* till the time of *Valerius*, S. *Augustin*'s Predecessor in the *See* of *Hippo:* Who being a *Greek*, and by reason of his little Skill in the *Latin* Tongue, unable to preach to the *Edification* of the People, admitted S. *Au-*

C. Theod. Leg. 11. Tit. 39. de fid. Test. l. 10. Sidon. Apoll. lib. 4. Epist. 11. p. 96. In Can. 58. Apost.

Part I. S. *Auguſtin* (whom he had lately ordain'd *Presbyter*) to preach before him. Which tho' at firſt 'twas ill reſented by ſome Biſhops in thoſe Parts, yet quickly became a Precedent for other Churches to follow after.

After theſe came Deacons: What the Duty of their Place was, appears from their Primitive Acts 6. Election, the Apoſtles ſetting them apart to *ſerve* or *miniſter to the Tables. i. e.* to attend upon and take Charge of thoſe daily *Proviſions* that were made for poor indigent Chriſtians; but certainly it implies alſo their being deſtinated to a peculiar Attendance at the Service of the *Lord's Table.* And both theſe may be very well meant in that Place, it being the Cuſtom of Chriſtians then to meet every Day at the *Lord's Table*, where they made their Offerings for the Poor, and when Poor and Rich had their Meals together. And hence it was ever an accounted Part of the *Deacon*'s Office, as to take care of the Poor, and to diſtribute the Monies given for their Relief and Maintenance; ſo to wait upon the Celebration of the *Euchariſt*, which being conſecrated by the Biſhop or *Presbyter*, the *Deacon* deliver'd the Sacramental Elements to the People. Beſides this, they were wont alſo to *preach* and to *baptize*, and were employ'd in many Parts of the Publick Service, eſpecially in guiding and directing of the People. The Number of them in any one Place was uſually reſtrain'd to *ſeven*; this being the Number originally inſtituted by the *Apoſtle*, and which might not be alter'd, altho' the City was never ſo *great* and *numerous*, as 'tis in the laſt *Canon* of the *Neocæſarean* Council. As the *Presbyters* were to the *Biſhop*, ſo the *Deacons* were to the *Presbyters*, to be aſſiſtant to them, and to give them all due Reſpect and Reverence. And therefore when ſome of them began to take too much upon them, to diſtribute the Sacrament before

fore the Bishop or Presbyter, and to take Place amongst the Presbyters, the Council of *Nice* took Notice of it as a piece of bold and saucy Usurpation, severely commanded them to know their Place, and to contain themselves within their own *Bounds* and *Measures*, and neither to meddle with the Sacrament but in their Order, nor to *sit down* before the *Presbyters*, unless it be by their Leave and Command, as 'tis express'd by the *Laodicean* Synod. Accordingly the first Council of *Arles*, forbids the Deacons to do any things of themselves, but to reserve the Honour to the *Presbyters*. Out of the Body of these *Deacons* there was usually one chosen to overlook the rest, the *Archdeacon*; an Office supposed to have been of good Antiquity in the Church, and of great Authority, especially in after-times, being generally styled the *Eye of the Bishop*, to inspect all Parts and Places of his Diocese. This was he that in the Church of *Rome* was called the *Cardinal Deacon*, who (as *Onuphrius* tells us) was at first but one, tho' the Number increased afterwards. While Churches were little, and the Services not many, the Deacons themselves were able to discharge them; but as these increased, so did their Labours, and therefore 'twas thought fit to take in some inferior Offices under them. This gave Being to

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Can. 18.

Can. 20.

Can. 18.

De Episc. Tit. & *Diacon. Card. p.* 24.

Sub-Deacons, who were to be Assistant to the *Deacon*, as the Deacon to the *Presbyter*, and he to the *Bishop*. One great Part of his Work was, to wait at the *Church-doors* in the Time of Publick Worship, to usher in and to bring out the several Orders of the *Catechumens* and *Penitents*, that none might mistake their proper Stations, and that no Confusion or Disorder might arise to the Disturbance of the Congregation. When he was first taken in, I cannot find, but he is mention'd in an Epistle of the *Roman Clergy* to them of *Carthage*, about

Conc. Laodic. can. 43. *vbi vid. Zon.* & *Balsam.*

Part I. about S. *Cyprian*'s Retirement, and elsewhere very often in *Cyprian*'s Epistles: Where he also speaks of the Acolythus. What his proper Business was, is not so certain; by some his Office is said to have been this, to *follow* (as the Word implies) or to go along with the Bishop in the Quality of an *honourable* Attendant, to be ready at hand to minister to him, and to be a Companion and Witness of his honest and unblamable Conversation, in case any evil Fame should arise, that might endeavour to blast his Reputation. But by others he is said to have been a *Taper-bearer*, to carry the *Lights* which were set up at reading of the *Gospel*. And this seems to be clear from the fourth Council of *Carthage*, where, at his Ordination he is appointed to receive at the *Archdeacon*'s Hand a *Candlestick* with a *Taper*, that he may know 'tis the Duty of his Place to light up the *Lights* in the *Church*. This might very well be in those Times, but 'tis certain the Office of *Acolythus* was in use long before that Custom of setting up *Lights* at the Reading of the *Gospel* was brought into the *Church*. By *Cyprian* also is mention'd the Office of the Exorcist, whose Business was to attend the *Catechumens* and *Energumeni*, or such as were possess'd of the Devil. For after the miraculous Power of casting out Devils began to cease, or at least not to be so common as it was, these possess'd Persons used to come to the *Out-parts* of the Church, where a Person was appointed to *exorcise* them, *i. e.* to pray over them, with such Prayers as were peculiarly composed for those Occasions; and this he did in the publick Name of the whole Church, the People also at the same time praying within; by which Means the possess'd Person was deliver'd from the Tyranny of the evil Spirit; without any such *Charms* and *Conjurations*, and other *unchristian* Forms and Rites, which by Degrees crept into this Office, and are at this Day in use in the Church

Inter. Ep. Cypr. Epist. 2. *p.* 8. *Ep.* 28. *p.* 41.

Can. 6.

Ep. 16. *p.* 29. & 146.

Church of *Rome*. Besides, to the *Exorcist*'s Office it belong'd to instruct the *Catechumens*, and to train them up in the first Principles of the *Christian Faith*: In which Sense the *Exorcist* is by *Harmenopulus* explain'd by *Catechist*; and to *exorcise* (says *Balsamon*) is κατηχεῖν ἀπίστους, to *instruct Unbelievers*. Chap. 8. *Ep. Can. 51. Tit. 9. Jur. Græc. Rom. p. 16. In Can. 26. Conc. Laodic.*

Next to the *Exorcist* was the *Lector* or READER, (mention'd frequently by S. *Cyprian*) whose Business was to stand near the *Ambo* or *Pulpit*, and to read those Portions of Holy Scripture which were appointed to be read as principal Parts of the Divine Service. 'Tis Office *Julian* (who was afterwards *Emperor*) when a young Student at *Nicomedia*, took upon him, and became a *Reader* in that Church; which he did only to blind his Cousin *Constantius*, who began to suspect him as inclining to *Paganism*, to which he openly revolted afterwards, and became a bitter and virulent Enemy to Christians; making an ill use of those Scriptures, which he had once *privately* study'd, and publickly read to the People. *Socrat. H. Eccl. lib. 3. c. 1. p. 166.* I know not whether it may be worth the while to take notice of the *Ostiarii*, or *Door-keeper*, answerable to the *Nethinims* in the *Jewish* Church; who were to attend the Church-doors at Times of Publick Meetings, to keep out notorious *Hereticks*, *Jews* and *Gentiles* from entring into the Christian Assemblies. It doubtless took its Rise in the times of Persecution, Christians then being forced to keep their Meetings as private and clancular as they could, and to guard their Assemblies with all possible Diligence; lest some *Jew* or *Infidel* stealing in, should have gone and accused them before the Magistrate. What other Officers there were (or whether any at all) in those times, in and about the Church, will not be worth our Labour to enquire.

To these Offices they were set apart by solemn Rites, of *Prayer* and *Imposition* of *Hands*; a Ceremony (so far as χειροτονία is strictly taken for *lifting* up the

Part I. the Hand in *Suffrage)* commonly used at *Athens*, and some of the *States* of *Greece*, in the designing and electing Persons to be Publick Magistrates. But more particularly in Use among the *Jews*, and from them doubtless (as many other of the *Synagogue-Rites*) transferr'd into the *Christian* Church, and there constantly used both as to the *lifting up* and *laying on* the Hands, as the Rite of conferring Ordination upon the Ministers of *Christ*. Only it is here to be remembred, that there was a *double Imposition* of Hands, in setting apart Ecclesiastical Officers: The one was καθιέρωσις, or by way of *Consecration*; and this was the proper way of ordaining the first Rank of Officers, *Bishops*, *Presbyters* and *Deacons*; the other εὐλογία, by way of *Blessing*; Hands being laid upon them only, as in the Absolution of Penitents, by way of solemn *Benediction*: And thus the inferior Officers, *Subdeacons*, *Readers*, *&c.* and *Deaconesses* were set apart. All Orders under Bishops were ordained by the Bishop, the Bishop himself by all the Bishops of that *Province*, who used to meet together for that purpose, if Nearness of Place and other Conveniences would allow; otherwise *three* (and in case of Necessity *two)* might do it, the rest testifying their Consent in Writing; and the Person thus ordain'd was to be confirm'd by the *Metropolitan* of that Province. And whereas the Council of *Antioch* provides, that no Bishop shall be ordain'd without the *Metropolitan* being present, it is to be understood (as *Balsamon* tells us) of his Leave and Permission, or his appointing it to be so. For the Ordination of the rest of the Clergy, *Priests*, *Deacons*, *&c.* the Act and Presence of one Bishop might suffice: And as no more than one was required, so one at least was necessary; the Power of conferring *Orders*, being even by those who otherwise have had no mighty Kindness for *Episcopacy*, acknowledg'd

Conc. Nicen. Can. 4.

Can. 19.

ledg'd an unquestionable *Right* of the Episcopal Office: Insomuch that in the Case of *Athanasius*, it was a just Exception against *Ischyras*, that he had been ordain'd by *Colythus*, who was no higher than a Presbyter, and consequently his Ordination by the Council was adjudged null and void. Chap. 8. *Athan. Apol. 2. de fug. sua, p. 570. Tom. 1.*

At all Ordinations, especially of superior Officers, the *People* of the Place were always present, and ratify'd the Action with their Approbation and Consent. And indeed it cannot be deny'd but that the People, in some Places especially, were very much consider'd in this Affair, it being seldom or never done without their *Presence and Suffrage*. To this end the Bishop was wont, before every Ordination, to *propound* and *publish* the Names of those who were to have holy Orders conferr'd upon them; that so the People, who best knew their Lives and Conversations, might interpose if they had any thing material to object against it. By which Means the *Unworthy* were discover'd and rejected, the *Deserving* honour'd and admitted; the Ordination became legitimate and satisfactory, having pass'd the common Vote and Suffrage without an Exception made against it, as *Cyprian* speaks. Hence the *Clergy*, of what Order soever, were said *prædicari*, to be *propounded* or published: And this Way seem'd so fit, and reasonable, that *Severus* the *Emperor*, (a wise and prudent Prince) in Imitation of the *Christians*, establish'd it in the Disposal of *Civil* Offices. For when he had a Mind to send out any Governors of Provinces, or to appoint *Receivers* of his *Revenues*, he propounded the Names of those he intended, desiring the People to except against the Persons, if they knew them guilty of any Crimes which they were able to make good against them: *Affirming it to be unfit* (says his own *Historian*) *that when the Christians and Jews did it in publishing those who were to be ordain'd their Priests*

Vid. Constit. Ap. lib. 8. c. 1004.

Cypr. Epist. 68. p. 113, 114.

Lamprid. in vit. Alex. Sev. c. 45. p. 570.

Part I. *and Ministers, the same should not be observed in the Election of Governors of Provinces, who had the Lives and Fortunes of Men committed to them.* When the Case so happen'd, that the Ordination was more remote or private, they were then required to bring sufficient *Testimonials.* Thus *Cyprian,* when ordaining *Saturus* and *Optatus* to be *Readers,* we examin'd (says he) whether the *Testimonials* agreed to them, which they ought to have who are admitted into the Clergy.

Ep. 24. *p.* 35.

And indeed they proceeded in this Affair with all imaginable Care and Prudence; they examin'd Mens Fitness for the Place to which they were set apart, enquired severely what had been the Course and Manner of their Life; how they had carry'd themselves in their Youth, and whether they had govern'd it by the strict Rules of Piety. This ancient Custom (as S. *Basil* calls it) was ratify'd by the *Nicene* Council, declaring, *That none should be ordain'd Presbyter without previous Examination, especially a strict Enquiry into his Life and Manners.* For the *Apostolick* Church (says *Joseph* the *Ægyptian,* in his *Arabick* Paraphrase of that *Canon*) admits none in this Case, but him that is of great Innocency and an unspotted Life; free from those Crimes and Enormities which he there particularly reckons up. They suffer'd not Men in those Days to *leap* into Ecclesiastical Orders, but by the usual Steps, and staying the appointed Times. *Cyprian* commends *Cornelius* Bishop of *Rome,* that he did not skip into the Chair, but pass'd thro' all the Ecclesiastical Offices, ascending thro' all the Degrees of Religion, till he came *ad sacerdotii sublime fastigium,* to the Top of the highest Order. A Thing expresly provided for by the Synod of *Sardis,* That no Man, tho' never so rich, tho' furnish'd with never so good a knack of *Speech* and *Oratory,* should yet be made Bishop before he had pass'd thro' the

Basil. Ep. 181. *p.* 194. *Tom.* 3.

Can. 9.

Ad Antonian. Ep. 52. *p.* 67.

Can. 10.

the preceding Orders of *Reader*, *Sub-deacon*, *Deacon*, and *Presbyter*; that having been found fit in each of these, he might, Step by Step, ascend up to the Episcopal Chair: And that he should spend some considerable Time in each of these Degrees; that so his Faith, and the Innocency and Excellency of his Life, his Constancy and Moderation might be made known to all; and his Fitness for that Sacred Function being made apparent, might procure him the greater Honour and Reverence from others. Men were then forced to stay their full Time before they could be promoted to any higher Order. They did not commence *Divines* and *Bishops* in a Day, (ἀυθήμερον ἅγιοι καὶ θεολόγοι, as *Nazianzen* elegantly calls them) like some he complains of in his Time, who were not polish'd by Time and Study, but fitted and made Bishops *all at once*; whom therefore he wittily compares to the *Dragon's Teeth*, which, the Fable tells us, *Cadmus* sowed at *Thebes*, which immediately sprung up *Giants* out of the Earth, arm'd *Cap-a-pee*, perfect *Men* and perfect *Warriors* in one Day: And just such (says he) were some Prelates, consecrated, made wise and learned in one Day, who yet understood nothing before, nor brought any thing to the *Order*, but only a *good Will* to be there. For the *Age* of the Persons that were to be ordain'd, they usually observed the *Apostolick* Canon, *not to choose a Novice*, but of an Age competent to that Office that he was chosen to; though it vary'd according to Times and Persons, and the Occasions of the Church. For that of *Bishops*, I find not any certain Age positively set down. *Photius*, in his *Nomo-Canon*, speaks of an *Imperial* Constitution, that requires a Bishop not to be under thirty five: But the *Apostolical Constitutions* allow not a Man to be made a Bishop under fifty Years of Age, as having then pass'd all *Juvenile* Petulancies and Disorders.

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Orat. 1. de Theol. p. 535. & in laud. Bas. Or. 20. p. 335.

Τιτλ. δ. κεφ. κή. p. 20.

Lib. 2. c. 11. p. 824.

Part I. 'Tis certain, they were not generally (ſome extraordinary Inſtances alter not the Caſe) promoted to that Office, till they were of a conſiderable Age, and thence frequently ſtyled *majores natu* in the Writings of the Church. *Presbyters* were commonly made at thirty; yea, the Council of *Neocæſarea* decreed, that no Man, tho' otherwiſe of never ſo unqueſtionable a Converſation, ſhould be ordain'd *Presbyter* before that Age: The Reaſon whereof they give, becauſe *Chriſt* himſelf was not *baptized*, nor began to preach till the thirtieth Year of his Age. The Council of *Agde* requires the ſame Age, but aſſigns another Reaſon; not before 30 Years of Age, becauſe then (ſay they) he comes to the Age of a *perfect Man*. *Deacons* were made at *twenty five*, and the like Diſtance and Proportion obſerved for the inferior Officers under them. I take no Notice in this Place of *Monks*, *Hermits*, *&c.* partly becauſe altho' they were under a kind of *Eccleſiaſtical* Relation, by reaſon of their more than ordinarily ſtrict and ſevere Profeſſion of Religion, yet were they not uſually in *Holy Orders*; and partly becauſe *Monachiſm* was of no very early Standing in the Church, beginning probably about the Times of the latter Perſecutions; and even then too, *Monks* were quite another Thing, both in *Profeſſion*, *Habit*, and *way of Life*, from what they are at this day; as will abundantly appear to him that will take the Pains to compare the Account which *Hierom*, *Auguſtin*, *Palladius*, *Caſſian*, and others give of thoſe *Primitive Monks*, with the ſeveral *Orders* in the Church of *Rome* at this day.

Can. 11.

Conc. Agd. Can. 17.

I ſhall only add, that out of the *Monks*, Perſons were uſually made choice of to be advanced into the *Clergy*, as is evident not only from Multitudes of Inſtances in the Writers of the fourth and following Centuries, but from an expreſs Law of the Empe-

Cod. Theod. l. 16. *tit.* 2. *de Epiſc. &c. l.* 32.

Emperor *Arcadius* to that purpose: The Strictness of their Lives, and the *Purity* of their Manners, more immediately qualifying them for those holy Offices; insomuch that many times they were advanced into the Episcopal Chair, without going thro' the usual intermediate Orders of the Church. Several Instances whereof (*Serapion*, *Apollonius*, *Agatho*, *Aristo*, and some others) *Athanasius* reckons up in his Epistle to *Dracontius*; who being a *Monk*, refused a *Bishoprick* to which he was chosen. But because we meet, in the ancient Writings of the Church, with very frequent mention of Persons of another Sex, *Deaconnesses*, who were employ'd in many Offices of Religion; it may not be amiss, in this Place, to give some short Account of them. Their Original was very early, and of equal standing with the Infancy of the Church; such was *Phœbe* in the Church of *Cenchris*, mention'd by S. *Paul*; such were those two *Servant-Maids* spoken of by *Pliny*, in his Letters to the Emperor, whom he examined upon the Rack: Such was the famous *Olympias* in the Church of *Constantinople*; not to mention any more particular Instances. They were either *Widows*, and then not to be taken into the Service of the Church under *threescore* Years of Age, according to S. *Paul*'s Direction; or else *Virgins*, who having been educated in order to it, and given Testimony of a chaste and sober Conversation, were set apart at *forty*. What the proper Place and Ministry of these *Deaconnesses* was in the ancient Church, tho' *Matthew Blastares* seems to render a little doubtful; yet certainly it principally consisted in such Offices as these, to attend upon the Women at times of Publick Worship, especially in the Administration of Baptism; that when they were to be divested in order to their *Immersion*, they might overshadow them, so as nothing of Indecency and Un-

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Tom. 1. *p.* 738.

Syntagm. c. 11. *lit. T. p.* 71. *Epiph. Hæres.* 79. *p.* 447.

Part I. comelineſs might appear. Sometimes they were employ'd in *inſtructing* the more rude and ignorant ſort of Women in the plain and eaſy Principles of *Chriſtianity*, and in preparing them for *Baptiſm*; otherwhiles in viſiting and attending upon Women that were ſick; in conveying Meſſages, Counſels, Conſolations, Relief, (eſpecially in times of Perſecution, when it was dangerous for the *Officers* of the Church) to the *Martyrs* and them that were in Priſon; and theſe Women no doubt it was that *Libanius* ſpeaks of amongſt the Chriſtians, who were ſo very ready to be employ'd in theſe Offices of Humanity. But to return.

Orat. de vinctis. p. 56.

Perſons being thus ſet apart for Holy Offices, the Chriſtians of thoſe Days diſcover'd no leſs Piety in that mighty Reſpect and Reverence which they paid to them. That the Miniſters of Religion ſhould be peculiarly honour'd and regarded, ſeems to have been accounted a piece of natural *Juſtice* by the common Sentiments of Mankind: The moſt barbarous and unpoliſh'd Nations that ever had a Value for any thing of Religion, have always had a proportionable Regard to them, to whom the Care and Adminiſtration of it belong. *Julian* the Emperor expreſly pleads for it as the moſt reaſonable thing in the World, that *Prieſts* ſhould be honour'd, yea, in ſome reſpects, *above* Civil Magiſtrates; as being the immediate Attendants and domeſtick Servants of *God*, our *Interceſſors* with Heaven, and the Means of deriving down great Bleſſings from God upon us. But never was this clearlier demonſtrated than in the Practice of the Primitive Chriſtians, who carry'd themſelves towards their *Biſhops* and *Miniſters* with that Kindneſs and Veneration which they were capable to expreſs towards them. S. *Paul* bears Record to the *Galatians*, that he was accounted ſo dear to them, that if the *plucking out their Eyes* would

Julian. Fragm. Oper. c. 1. *p.* 542.

Gal. 4. 15.

would have done him any good, they were ready to have done it for his ſake. And S. *Clemens* teſtifies of the *Corinthians*, that they walked in the Laws of God, being ſubject to them that had the *Rule over them*; yielding alſo due Honour to the Seniors or Elder Perſons that were amongſt them. That by ἡγούμενοι in this Place he ſhould mean *Civil Magiſtrates*, (as ſome have told us) I can hardly be perſuaded, both becauſe 'tis the *ſame* Word that is uſed by the Author to the *Hebrews*, *Obey*, τοῖς ἡγουμένοις ὑμῶν, *them that have the Rule over you, and ſubmit yourſelves*; (and indeed both *Euſebius* and S. *Hierom* of old, obſerved ſuch a mighty Affinity in the *Phraſe* between this and the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, as certainly to conclude S. *Clemens* to have been, if not the *Author*, at leaſt the *Tranſlator* of that Epiſtle;) and alſo becauſe the ſole Occaſion of S. *Clemens*'s writing this Epiſtle, was a Mutiny which they had made againſt the *Spiritual* Guides and Governors; and therefore, according to the right Art of *Orators*, he firſt commends them for their eminent Subjection to them, that he might with the more Advantage reprove and cenſure them for their Schiſm afterwards; which he does ſeverely in the latter Part of the Epiſtle; and towards the End of it, he exhorts thoſe who had laid the Foundation of the Sedition, to become ſubject to their Presbyters; and being inſtructed to Repentance, to bow the Knees of their Hearts, to lay aſide the arrogant and inſolent Boldneſs of their Tongues, and to learn to ſubject and ſubmit themſelves. The Truth is, Biſhops and Miniſters were then looked upon as the common *Parents* of Chriſtians; whom as ſuch they honour'd and obey'd, and to whom they repair'd for Counſel and Direction in all important Caſes. 'Tis plain from ſeveral Paſſages in *Tertullian*, That none could lawfully *marry*, till they had firſt adviſed with

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Pag. 2.

Heb. 13. 17.

Hiſt. Eccl. l. 3. *c.* 38. *p.* 110. *de Scrip. Eccl. in Clem.*

Vid. Conſtit. Apoſt. l. 2. *c.* 33. *p.* 859.

De monogam. c. 11. *p.* 531. *Ad Uxor. l.* 2. *c.* 2. 9. *Vid. de Coron. mil. c.* 13. *p.* 139.

Part I. with the Bishop and Clergy of the Church, and had asked and obtained their Leave; which probably they did, to secure the Person from marrying with a *Gentile*, or any of them that were without, and from the Inconveniences that might ensue upon such a Match. No Respect, no Submission was thought great enough, whereby they might do Honour to them; they were wont to kiss their Hands, to embrace their Feet; and at their going from, or returning home, or indeed their coming unto any Place, to wait upon them, and either to receive or dismiss them with the universal Confluence of the People. Happy they thought themselves, if they could but entertain them in their Houses, and bless their Roofs with such welcome Guests. Amongst the various ways of Kindness which *Constantine* the Great shewed to the *Clergy*, the *Writer* of his Life tells us, That he used to treat them at his own *Table*, tho' in the meanest and most despicable Habit: He never went a Journey, but he took some of them along with him; reckoning that thereby he made himself surer of the propitious and favourable Influence of the Divine Presence. What Honours he did them at the Council of *Nice*, where he refused to sit down, till they had given him Intimation; with what magnificent Gifts and Entertainments he treated them afterwards, the same Author relates at large. The truth is, the Piety of that devout and excellent Prince, thought nothing too good for those who were the Messengers of God, and Ministers of holy Things: And so infinitely tender was he of their Honour, as to profess, that if at any time he should spy a *Bishop* overtaken in any immodest and uncomely Action, he would cover him with his own *Imperial Robe*, rather than others should take Notice of it, to the Scandal of his Place and Person. And because their

Vid. Chrys. de S. Melet. Antioch. Hom. 45. *To.* 1. *p.* 526. & *Annot. p.* 91.

De vit. Const. l. 3. *c.* 42. *p.* 429.

Lib. 3.

Theod. Hist. Eccl. l. 1. *c.* 11.

Spiritual

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Spiritual Authority and Relation might not be sufficient to secure them from the Contempt of rude and prophane Persons; therefore the first Christian Emperors invested them with Power even in *Civil* Causes, as the way to beget them Respect and Authority amongst the People. Thus *Constantine* (as *Sozomen* tells us, and he sets it down as a great Argument of that Prince's Reverence for Religion) ordained, that Persons contending in Law might, if they pleased, remove their Cause out of the *Civil* Courts, and appeal to the *Judgment* of the Bishops; whose Sentence should be *firm*, and take place before that of any other Judges, as if it had been immediately passed by the Emperor himself. And Causes thus judged by *Bishops*, all Governors of Provinces and their Officers were presently to put into Execution; which was afterwards ratified by two Laws, one of *Arcadius*, another of *Honorius*, to that purpose. This Power the Bishops sometimes *delegated* to their inferior Clergy, making them Judges in these Causes, as appears from what *Socrates* reports of *Sylvanus*, Bishop of *Troas*, That finding a *Mal-Administration* of this Power, he took it out of the Hands of his *Clergy*, and devolved the hearing and determining Causes over to the *Laity*. And to name no more, S. *Augustine* more than once and again tells us, how much he was crouded, and even oppressed in deciding the Contests and Causes of Secular Persons. It seems they thought themselves happy in those days, if they could have their Causes heard and determined by *Bishops*.

Hist. Eccl. l. 1. c. 9. p. 413.

C. Tit. 4. de Episc. Audient. ll. 7, 8.

Hist. Eccl. l. 7. c. 37. p. 383.

Ep. 147. col. 68. 5. vid. ep. Nebrid. ad Aug. ep. 114. & alibi passim.

A Pious Bishop, and a Faithful Minister was in those Days dearer to them than the most valuable Blessings upon Earth, and they could want any thing rather than be without them. When *Chrysostom* was driven by the *Empress* into Banishment, the People as he went along burst into Tears, and cryed out, *'Twas better the Sun should not shine, than that* John Chry-

Chrys. Ep. 125. tom. 4. p. 763.

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Chrysostom *should not preach.* And when, through the Importunity of the People, he was recalled from his former Banishment, and diverted into the Suburbs till he might have an Opportunity to make a publick Vindication of his Innocency, the People not enduring such Delays, the Emperor was forced to send for him into the City, the People universally meeting him, and conducting him to his Church, with all Expressions of Reverence and Veneration. Nay, while he was yet *Presbyter* of the Church of *Antioch*, so highly was he loved and honoured by the People of that Place, that though he was chosen to the *See* of *Constantinople*, and sent for by the Emperor's Letters, though their Bishop made an Oration on purpose to persuade them to it, yet would they by no means be brought to part with him: And when the Messengers by Force attempted to bring him away, he was forced, to prevent a Tumult, to withdraw and hide himself, the People keeping a Guard about him, lest he should be taken from them. Nor could the Emperor or his Agents with all their Arts effect it, till he used this Wile: He secretly wrote to the Governor of *Antioch*, who pretended to *Chrysostom*, that he had Concerns of moment to impart to him, invited him to a private Place without the City, where seizing upon him, by Mules which he had in readiness he conveyed him to *Constantinople*: Where that his Welcome might be more magnificent, the Emperor commanded, That all Persons of Eminency, both *Ecclesiastical* and *Civil*, should with all possible Pomp and State go *six Miles* to meet him. Of *Nazianzen* (who sate in the same Chair of *Constantinople* before him) I find, that when he would have left that Bishoprick by reason of the Stirs that were about it, and delivered himself up to Solitude and a private Life, as a thing much more suitable to his Humour and *Genius*; many of

Socr. Hist. Ecc. l. 6. c. 16. p. 324.

Metaphr. in vit. Chrys. apud Surium ad diem 27.

Greg. Presbyt. de vit. Greg. Naz. præfix. oper. Naz.

of the People came about him, with Tears beſeeching him not to forſake his Flock, which he had hitherto fed with ſo much Sweat and Labour. They could not then loſe their ſpiritual Guides, but they looked upon themſelves as *Widows* and *Orphans*, reſenting their Death with a general Sorrow and Lamentation, as if they had loſt a *common Father*. *Nazianzen* reports, that when his Father (who was Biſhop of but a little *Dioceſs*) lay very ſick, and all other Remedies proved unſucceſsful, the People generally flocked to Church, and (though it was then the *joyful* Time of *Eaſter*) broke out into mournful and paſſionate Complaints, and with the moſt earneſt Prayers and Tears beſought God for his Life. And of *Baſil*, Biſhop of *Cæſarea*, he tells us, that when he lay a dying, the whole City came about him, not able to bear his Departure from them, praying as if they would have *laid Hands* upon his Soul, and by Force detained it in his Body: They were (ſays he) even diſtracted with the Thoughts of ſo great a Loſs, nor was there any who would not have been willing to have been deprived of *Part* of his own Life, might it have added unto his. His Funeral was ſolemnized with all poſſible Teſtimonies of Love and honourable Attendance, and with the abundant Tears not only of *Chriſtians*, but of *Jews* and *Heathens*; the Confluence ſo vaſt, that many were preſſed to Death in the Croud, and ſent to bear him Company to his *long home*. And that we may ſee that their Reſpect did not lie merely in a few kind Words or external Proteſtations, they made it good in more real and evident Demonſtrations, by providing *liberal Maintenance* for them, parting at firſt with their own Eſtates to ſupply the Uſes of the Church, and after that, making no leſs large than frequent Contributions, which could not but amount to very conſiderable Sums, the Piety of *Chriſtians*

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In laud. patr. Or. 19. p. 304.

In laud. Baſil. Or. 20. p. 371.

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stians daily adding to their Liberality; of which we may make some Estimate, by what the Heathen Historian, with a little kind of Envy, relates only of the Church of *Rome*, (and doubtless it was so in some Proportion in other Places) that the Profits of the *Clergy*, arising from *Oblations* chiefly, was so great, as to enable them to live in a *Prince-like* State and Plenty. And not long after, it became the Object not only of Admiration, but Envy; insomuch that *Chrysostom* was forced to make one whole Sermon *against those that envied the Wealth of the Clergy*. It was also the great Care of those Times, to free them from what might be either scandalous or burdensome to their Calling. *Constantine* decreed, That the Orthodox Clergy should be exempt from all Civil Offices, or whatever might hinder their Attendance upon the Services of the Church; his Son *Constantius*, That Bishops in many Cases should not be chargeable in the Secular Courts, but be tryed in an Assembly of Bishops: Which Privilege was extended by *Honorius* to all the *Clergy*, that they should be tryed before their Bishops; before whom he also ordained, that all Causes properly belonging to Religion should be brought, and be determined by them: And by another *Constitution*, That for the Veneration that is due to the Church, all Ecclesiastical Causes should be decided with all possible Speed. And to name no more, that the Persons of Ministers might be secured from foreign Attempts, he, and his Collegue *Arcadius*, made a Law, That whosoever did offer any Violence to them, should upon Conviction, or confessing of the Fact, be punished with *Death*; and that the Ministers of Civil Justice, should not stay till the Bishop complained of the Injury that was done (it being probable that he would rather incline to *Mercy* and *Forgiveness*) but that every one in this Case should be admitted and encouraged to prefer

Amm. Marcellin. lib. 27. p. 1739.

Περὶ τοῦ ὅτι οὐ χρὴ ὀνειδίζειν τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν ὑπὲρ ὧν σῶσιν, &c. *Tom. 6. p. 896. edit. Savil.*

Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. 10. c. 7. p. 394. & Cod. Theod. lib. 16. Tit. 2. leg. 1, 2.

Ib. l. 12.

Ib. l. 21.

Ib. Tit. 11. l. 1.

Ib. lib. 2. Tit. 4. l. 7.

Lib. 16. Tit. 2. l. 31.

fer and prosecute the Charge: And in case the rude Multitude should by Arms, or otherwise, obstruct the Execution, and that the Powers of that Place could not see it done, that then they should call in the Assistance of the Governor of the Province, to see Justice put into Execution. And because, next to his *Person*, nothing is so dear to a *Clergyman* as his *Credit* and *Reputation*, therefore the Emperor *Honorius* took care by a Law, that whosoever (be he a Person of the highest Rank) should charge any *Clergy-man* with Crimes which he was not able to make good, he himself should be publickly accounted vile and infamous, it being but just and equal (*says the Law*) that as Guilt should be punished, and Offenders reckoned as Spots and Blemishes to the Church; so that injured Innocency should be righted and maintained. How infinitely tender the first general Council of *Constantinople* was in this Case, to secure the Honour and good Name of *Bishops* and *Clergy-men*, against the malicious Insinuations and Charges of false Accusers, may appear by the large Provision which they make about it in the *sixth Canon* of that Council. And because it sometimes so happens, that a Man's Enemies are those of his own House, therefore the *Apostolical Canons* ordain, That if any *Clergy-man* reproach and defame a Bishop, he shall be deposed from his Ministry; for thou mayest not (says the Canon) *speak evil of the Ruler of thy People*: But if it be a *Presbyter* or *Deacon*, whom he thus reproaches, he shall be suspended from the Execution of his Office. So sacred and venerable did they then account the Persons and Concernments of those who ministred in the Affairs of Divine Worship.

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Ib. l. 41.

Can. 55, 56.

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CHAP. IX.

Of their usual Worship, both Private and Publick

The Christians Worship of God in their Families discovered. Their usual Times of Prayer. Prayers before and after Meals. Singing of Psalms, and reading the Scriptures, at the same time. Frequency in Prayer noted in divers Instances. Their great Reverence for the Holy Scriptures, in reading, expounding, and committing them to Memory. Several Instances of it. Their Care in instructing their Families in Divine Things. Singing of Psalms mixed with their usual Labours. An Account of their Publick Worship. The Order of the Service in their Assemblies. Prayer: Reading the Scriptures: Two Lessons out of each Testament. Clemens's *Epistle, and the Writings of other Pious Men read in the Church. Singing a Part of the Publick Service. How ancient: What those Hymns were. The Sermon or Discourse, upon what Subject usually. Such Discourses called* Tractatus, *and why. More Sermons than one at the same Time. Sermons preached in the Afternoon as well as in the Morning. The mighty Concourse and Confluence of People to these Publick Solemnities. The Departure of the Catechumens, Penitents, &c. The* Missa Catechumenorum, *what. The* Missa Fidelium. *The Word* Missa *or* Mass, *whence and how used in*

in the Writers of those Times. The singular Reverence they shewed in these Duties. Great Modesty and Humility. Praying with Hands lift up in the Form of a Cross, why. They prayed either kneeling or standing. Sitting in Prayer noted as a Posture of great Irreverence. Praying towards the East. The Universality of this Custom. The Reasons of it enquired into. Their Reverence in hearing God's Word. The People generally stood. Standing up at the Gospels. The remarkable Piety and Devotion of Constantine *the Great. No departing the Congregation till the Blessing was given.*

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THUS far we have discovered the Piety of those ancient Times, as to those necessary *Circumstances* that relate to the Worship of God, we are next to see wherein their WORSHIP itself did consist; which we shall consider both as *Private* and *Publick*, that which they performed at Home, and that which was done in their Solemn and *Church-Assemblies:* Only let it be remembred, that under the Notion of Worship I here comprehend all those Duties of *Piety* that refer to God. The Duties of their *Private* Worship, were of two Sorts, either such as were more *solemn* and stated, and concerned the whole Family, or such as Persons discharged *alone*, or at least did not tie up themselves to usual Times. For the first, which are properly *Family-Duties*, they were usually performed in this Order: At their first rising in the Morning, they were wont to meet together, and to betake themselves to Prayer (as is plainly implied in *Chrysostom*'s Exhortation) to praise God for the Protection and Refreshment of the Night,

Hom. 1. de precat. tom. 1. p. 7, 50. vid. Basil. Ep. ad Greg. de vit. solit. tom. 3. p. 43. A.

Part I. Night, and to beg his Grace and Blessing for the following day: This was done by the *Master* of the House, unless some *Minister* of Religion were present. 'Tis probable that at this Time they recited the *Creed*, or some Confession of their Faith, by which they professed themselves *Christians*, and, as 'twere, armed themselves against the Assaults of Dangers and Temptations; however, I question not, but that now they read some Parts of *Scripture*, which they were most ready to do at all Times, and therefore certainly would not omitt it now. That they had their set *Hours* for Prayer, the *third*, *sixth*, and *ninth* Hour, is plain, both from *Cyprian*, *Clem. Alexandrinus*, and others. This they borrowed from the *Jews*, who divided the Day into four *greater Hours*, the *first*, *third*, *sixth*, and *ninth* Hour, the three last whereof were stated Hours of Prayer; the first Hour began at six in the Morning, and held till Nine; the Third from Nine till Twelve; and at this Hour 'twas that the *Apostles* and *Christians* were met together, when the *Holy Ghost* descended upon them; the sixth Hour was from twelve to three in the *Afternoon*, and at this Time *Peter went up to the House-top to pray*; the ninth was from three till six at Night, and now it was that *Peter* and *John* went up to the Temple, *it being the ninth Hour of Prayer*. This Division was observed by the *Christians* of succeeding Times, though whether punctually kept to in their *Family-Devotions*, I am not able to affirm. About *Noon*, before their going to Dinner, some Portions of *Scripture* were read; and the Meat being set upon the *Table*, a *Blessing* was solemnly begged of God, as the Fountain of all Blessings (and so religious herein was the good Emperor *Theodosius jun.* that he would never eat any Meat, no not so much as a Fig, or any other Fruit, before he had first given Thanks to the great *Sovereign Creator*) and both Meat and Drink

De Orat. Dom. p. 196.
Strom. lib. 7. p. 722.
Clem. Alex. strom. lib. 7. p. 728.
Tert. Apol. c. 39. p. 32.
Sozom. præfat. ad Hist. Eccl. p. 385.
De Cor. mil. c. 3. p. 102. lib. 2. in Job. fol. 39. col. 2. tom. 2.

set

set apart with the *Sign* of the *Cross*, (a Custom they used in the most common Actions of Life) as is expressly affirmed both by *Tertullian* and *Origen*; where he also gives a Form of such Prayers as they were wont to use before Meals, *viz.* that lifting up their Eyes to Heaven, they prayed thus: *Thou that givest Food to all Flesh, grant that we may receive this Food with thy Blessing: Thou Lord hast said, that if we drink any thing that is deadly, if we call upon thy Name, it shall not hurt us; thou therefore who art Lord of all Power and Glory, turn away all evil and malignant Quality from our Food, and whatever pernicious Influence it may have upon us.* * When they were at Dinner, they sung *Hymns* and *Psalms*; a Practice which † *Clem. Alexandrinus* commends, as very suitable to *Christians*, as a modest and decent Way of praising God, while we are partaking of his Creatures. § *Chrysostom* greatly pleads for it, that Men should be careful to teach them their Wives and Children, and which they shall use even at their *ordinary* Works, but especially at *Meals*, such divine Songs being an excellent *Antidote* against Temptations: For (*says he*) as the Devil is never more ready to ensnare us than at *Meals*, either by *Intemperance*, *Ease*, or immoderate *Mirth*, therefore both before and at *Meals* we should fortify ourselves with *Psalms*; nay, and when we rise from the *Table*, with our Wives and Children, we should again sing *Hymns* to God. They used also to have the *Scriptures* read; and, as I have elsewhere noted out of *Nazianzen*, every time they took the *Cup* to drink, made the Sign of the *Cross*, and called upon *Christ*. Dinner being ended, they concluded with *Prayer*, giving Thanks to God for their present Refreshment, and begging his continued Provision of those good Things which he had promised to them. So great a Place had *Religion* in those Days even in Mens common and natural Actions, and so careful

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* *Nesit vel hora convivii gratia cœlestis immunis, sonet Psalmos convivium sobrium magis carissimos pascens, si sit nobis spiritualis auditio, prolectet aures religiosa mulcedo.* Cyprian. Epist. ad Donat. *in fine.*

† *Pædag. lib. 2. c. 4. p.* 165.

§ *In Psal.* 41. *tom.* 3. *p.* 147.

Cypr. Ep. 1. *p.* 7.

Cl. Alex. ut supra.

Basil. Ep. ad Greg. tom. 3. *p.* 46.

Part I. were they, not to *starve* the Soul, while they were *feeding* of the Body. Much after the same Rate they spent the rest of the Day, till the Night approached; when, before their going to rest, the Family was again called to *Prayer*, after which they went to Bed: About *Midnight* they were generally wont to rise, to *pray* and to sing *Hymns* to God. This Custom was very ancient, and doubtless took its Original from the first times of Persecution, when not daring to meet together in the *Day*, they were forced to keep their Religious Assemblies in the *Night*; and tho' this was afterwards antiquated, as being found inconvenient for the Generality of *Christians*, yet did it still continue in the *nocturnal* Hours of *Monasteries* and Religious *Orders*.

Cl. Alex. Padag. lib. 2. c. 9. p. 185.

But besides these stated and ordinary Devotions, performed by a joint Concurrence of the Family, the *Christians* of those Days were careful to spend all the time they could, even when alone, in Actions of Piety and Religion. They were most frequent in *Prayer*: *Eusebius* reports of S. *James* the *just*, that he was wont every Day to go alone into the Church, and there *kneeling* upon the Pavement so long to pour out his Prayers to God, till his Knees became as *hard* and *brawny* as a *Camel's*; the same which *Nazianzen* also tells us of his good Sister *Gorgonia*, that by often praying, her Knees were become hard, and did as 'twere stick to the Ground. *Constantine* the Great, tho' burden'd with the Cares of so vast an Empire, did yet every day at his wonted Hours withdraw from all the Company of the *Court*, retire into his *Closet*, and upon his Knees offer up his Prayers to God: And to let the World know how much he was devoted to this Duty, he caused his *Image* in all his Gold-*Coins*, in his *Pictures* and *Statues*, to be represented in the Posture of a *Person praying, with his Hands spread abroad, and his Eyes lift up to Heaven.* Their next Care was, diligently and

Hist Eccl. lib. 2. c. 23. p. 63. ex Hegesippo.

In laud. Gorgon. or. 10. p. 183.

De vit. Const. lib. 4. c. 22.

and seriously to read the *Scripture*, to be mighty in the Divine *Oracles*, as indeed they had an invaluable Esteem of, and Reverence for the Word of God, as the Book which they infinitely prized beyond all others; upon which Account *Nazianzen* very severely chides his dear Friend *Gregory Nyssen*, that having laid aside the Holy Scriptures (the most excellent Writings in the World) which he was wont to read both *privately* to himself, and *publickly* to the People, he had given up himself to the Study of *foreign* and prophane Authors, desirous rather to be accounted an *Orator* than a *Christian*. S. *Augustin* tells us, that after his Conversion (how meanly soever he had before thought of them) the *Scriptures* were become the Matter of his most *pure* and *chaste* Delight, in respect whereof all other Books (even those of *Cicero* himself, which once he so much doted on) became dry and unsavory to him. In the Study of this Book it was, that *Christians* then mainly exercised themselves, as thinking they could never fully enough *understand* it, or deeply enough *imprint* it upon their Hearts and Memories. Of the younger *Theodosius*, they tell us, that rising early every Morning, he, together with his Sisters, interchangeably sung *Psalms* of Praise to God: The Holy Scriptures he could exactly *repeat* in any part of them, and was wont to discourse out of them with the Bishops that were at *Court*, as readily as if he had been an old Bishop *himself*. We read of *Origen*, though then but a Child, that when his Father commanded him to commit some Places of Scripture to *Memory*, he most willingly set himself to it; and not content with the bare reading, he began to enquire into the more profound and recondite Meaning of it, often asking his Father (to his no less *Joy* than *Admiration*) what the Sense of this or that Place of Scripture was: And this Thirst after Divine Knowledge still continued and increased

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Epist. 43. *p.* 804.

Vid. Confess. l. 3 *c.* 5. *& l.* 7 *c.* 20, 21.

Socrat. H. Ecc. l. 7. *c.* 22. *p.* 361.

Euf. Hist. Ecc. l. 6. *c.* 2. *p.* 202.

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in him all his Life; S. *Hierom* reporting it out of a Letter of one who was his great *Companion* and Benefactor, that he never went to *Meals* without ſome part of Scripture read, never to *Sleep*, till ſome about him had read them to him; and that both by *Night* and *Day*, no ſooner had he done praying, but he betook himſelf to reading; and after reading, returned again to Prayer. *Valens*, Deacon of the Church of *Jeruſalem*, a venerable old Man, had ſo entirely given up himſelf to the Study of the Scriptures, that it was all one to him to *read* or to *repeat* whole *Pages* together. The like we find of *John* an *Ægyptian* Confeſſor (whom *Euſebius* ſaw and heard) that tho' both his *Eyes* were put out, and his Body mangled with unheard of Cruelty, yet he was able at any time to repeat any Places or Paſſages either out of the *Old* or *New* Teſtament; which when I firſt heard him do in the publick Congregation, I ſuppoſed him (*ſays he*) to have been reading in a Book, till coming near and finding how it was, I was ſtruck with great Admiration at it. Certainly *Chriſtians* then had no mean Eſteem of, and took no ſmall Delight in theſe Sacred Volumes. For the Sake of this Book (which he had choſen to be the *Companion* and *Counſellor* of his Life) *Nazianzen* profeſſes he had willingly undervalued and relinquiſhed all other Things. This was the *Mine* where they enriched themſelves with Divine Treaſures, a Book where they furniſhed themſelves with a true Stock of Knowledge; as S. *Hierom* ſpeaks of *Nepotian*, that by daily Reading and Meditation he had made his Soul a *Library* of Chriſt: And he tells us of *Bleſilla* a devout Widow, that though ſhe was ſo far over-run with Weakneſs and Sickneſs, that her *Foot* would ſcarce bear her *Body*, or her *Neck* ſuſtain the Burden of her *Head*, yet ſhe was never found without a *Bible* in her *Hand*.

Ep. ad Marcell. tom. 1. p. 129.

Euſeb. de Martyr. Paleſt. c. 11. p. 336. Ib. c. ult. p. 334.

De pace, Or. 12. p. 193.

Epitaph. Nep. nom. 1. p. 25. Ep. ad Paul. p. 157.

Nor

Nor did they covetously hoard up, and reserve this excellent Knowledge to *themselves*, but freely *communicated* it to others, especially were careful to *catechize* and instruct their Children and Servants in the Principles of Religion. S. *Clemens* praises the *Corinthians*, that they took Care to admonish their young Men to follow those Things that were modest and comely, and accordingly exhorts them to instruct the *younger* in the Knowledge of the Fear of God, to make their Children Partakers of the Discipline of Christ, to teach them how much Humility and a Chaste Love do prevail with God, that the Fear of him is good and useful, and preserves all those who with pure Thoughts lead a holy Life according to his Will. The *Historian* observes of *Constantine*, that his first and greatest Care towards his *Sons* was, to secure the Happiness of their *Souls*, by sowing the Seeds of Piety in their Minds, which he did partly himself, instructing them in the Knowledge of Divine Things, and partly by appointing such *Tutors* as were most approved for Religion; and when he had taken them into a Partnership of the Government, and either by private Admonitions, or by Letters gave them Counsels to the Steering themselves; this was always the first and chief, that they should prefer the Knowledge and Worship of *God*, the great *King* of the World, before all other Advantages, yea, before the *Empire* itself. For this *Nazianzen* peculiarly commends his Mother, that not only she herself was *consecrated* to God, and brought up under a pious Education, but that she conveyed it down as a necessary Inheritance to her *Children*; and it seems her Daughter *Gorgonia* was so well seasoned with these holy Principles, that she religiously walked in the Steps of so good a Pattern, and did not only reclaim her *Husband*, but educated her *Children* and *Nephews* in the Ways of Religion, giving them an

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Pag. 3.

Ib. p. 31.

De vit. Const. lib. 4. *c.* 51.

Ib. c. 52. *p.* 552.

In laud. Cæsaris, Or. 10. *p.* 161.

Id. Or. 11. *p.* 80.

Part I. excellent Example while ſhe *lived*, and leaving this as her laſt Charge and Requeſt when ſhe *died*. This was the *Diſcipline* under which *Chriſtians* were brought up in thoſe times; Religion was inſtilled into them betimes, which grew up and mixed itſelf with their ordinary Labours and Recreations; inſomuch that the moſt rude and illiterate Perſons, inſtead of prophane wanton *Songs*, which *vitiate* and corrupt the Minds of Men, τὰς σαλαγικὰς ᾠδὰς, as *Chryſoſtom* calls them (*Songs of the Devil's Compoſure*) uſed nothing but *ſpiritual* and divine *Hymns*: So that (as S. *Hierom* relates of the Place where he lived) you could not go into the Field, but you might hear the *Plowman* at his *Hallelujahs*, the *Mower* at his *Hymns*, and the *Vine-dreſſer* ſinging *David*'s Pſalms.

In Pſalm. 117. *tom.* 3. *p.* 358. *Epiſt. ad Marc. tom.* 1. *p.* 127.

Thus they carried themſelves at Home; what they did in Publick, in their *Church-Aſſemblies*, on the Lord's-day eſpecially, is next to be conſidered: The Manner whereof, I ſhall briefly repreſent, as it generally, and for the moſt part, obtained in thoſe Ages; for it could not but vary ſomething according to *Time* and *Place*. And here I ſhould ſave myſelf the Trouble of any farther Search, by ſetting down the Account which *Juſtin Martyr* and *Tertullian* give of their *publick* Worſhip, in their *Apologies* for the *Chriſtians*; but that I am ſatisfied they did not deſign to give a perfect and punctual Account of what was done at their Religious Aſſemblies; as might ſufficiently appear from this one thing, That the firſt of them, in thoſe Places, ſpeaks not any thing of their *Hymns* and *Pſalms*, which yet, that they were (even in the times wherein they lived) a conſtant Part of the *Divine Service*, no Man that is not wholly a Stranger in Church-Antiquity can be ignorant of. I ſhall therefore out of them and others, pick up, and put together, what ſeems to have conſtituted the main Body of their Publick Duties, and repreſent them in that Order

Order wherein they were performed, which usu- Chap. 9.
ally was in this Manner: At their first coming together into the *Congregation*, they began with Prayer, as *Tertullian* at least probably intimates (for I do not find it in any besides him:) We come together (says he) unto God, that being *banded* as 'twere into an *Army*, we may besiege him with our Prayers and Petitions; a *Violence* which is very pleasing and grateful to him. I do not from hence positively conclude, that Prayer was the first Duty they began with, though it seems fairly to look that way; especially if *Tertullian* meant to represent the Order as well as the Substance of their Devotions. After this followed the Reading of the *Scriptures*, both of the *Old* and *New Testament*, both the *Commentaries* of the *Apostles*, and the *Writings* of the *Prophets*, as *Justin Martyr* informs us. How much of each was read at one Meeting in the first times, is not known, it being then unfixed and arbitrary; because their Meetings by the sudden Interruption of the Heathens, were oft disturbed and broken up; and therefore both *Justin* and *Tertullian* confess, that they only read as much as *Occasion* served, and the *Condition* of the present times did require: But afterwards there were *set Portions* assigned, both out of the *Old* and *New Testament*, two *Lessons* out of each, as we find it in the Author of the *Apostolical Constitutions*. Nay, not only the *Canonical* Scriptures, but many of the Writings of *Apostolical* Men (such as were eminent for *Place* and *Piety*) were in those Days publickly read in the Church; such was the famous Epistle of S. *Clemens* to the *Corinthians*; of which, and of the Custom in like Cases, *Dionysius*, Bishop of *Corinth*, who lived about the Year 172, gives *Soter*, Bishop of *Rome*, this Account: *To Day* (says he) *we kept Holy the* Lord's-day, *wherein we read your* Epistle, *which we shall* constantly *read*

Apol. c. 39. p. 31.

Ap. 2. p. 98.

L. 2. c. 57. p. 875.

Euf. Hist. Ecc. l. 4. c. 23. p. 145.

Part I. *for our Instruction, as we also do the first Epistle which* Clemens *wrote to us.* The like *Eusebius* reports of *Hermas*'s *Pastor* (a Book so called) and S. *Hierom* of the Writings of S. *Ephrem*, the famous Deacon of *Edessa*, that in some Churches they were publickly read after the reading of the Holy Scriptures. About this Part of the Service it was that they sung *Hymns* and *Psalms*, a considerable Part of the Divine Worship, (as it had ever been accounted both amongst *Jews* and *Gentiles*) and more immediately serviceable for celebrating the Honour of God, and lifting up the Minds of Men to Divine and Heavenly Raptures. 'Twas in use in the very Infancy of the Christian Church, spoken of largely by S. *Paul*, and continued in all Ages after: Insomuch that *Pliny* reports it as the main Part of the Christians Worship, *that they met together before Day, to join in singing Hymns to Christ, as God.* These Hymns were either *extemporary* Raptures, so long as immediate *Inspiration* lasted; or *set* Compositions, either taken out of the Holy Scriptures, or of their own composing, as *Tertullian* tells us. For it was usual then for any Persons to compose Divine Songs, to the Honour of *Christ*, and to sing them in the Publick Assemblies; till the Council of *Laodicea* ordered, that no *Psalms* composed by *private* Persons should be recited in the Church; where tho' by the ἰδιωτικοὶ ψαλμοὶ, the two *Greek Scholiasts* will have certain *Psalms* ascribed to *Solomon*, and others to be understood, yet 'tis much more reasonable to understand it of *private Compositions*, usual a long time in the Church, and here for good Reason prohibited. By this Council it was likewise appointed, That the Psalms should not be one entire continued Service, but that a *Lesson* should be interposed in the midst, after every Psalm; which was done (as *Balsamon* and *Alexius Aristenus* tell us) to take off the Wearyness

Hist. Ecc. l. 3. c. 3. p. 72.
Descript. Ecc. in voc. Ephrem, p. 300.
Lib. 10. ep. 97.
Ap. c. 39. p. 32.
Eus. l. 5. c. 28. p. 196.
Can. 17.

rineſs of the People, whoſe Minds might be apt to tire in paſſing thro' thoſe prolix Offices all together, eſpecially the Leſſons being ſo large and many. In this Duty the whole Congregation bore a Part, joining all together in a common Celebration of the Praiſes of God; afterwards the Cuſtom was to ſing *alternatim*, Courſe by Courſe, anſwering one another; firſt brought in (as we are told) by *Flavianus* and *Diodorus* in the Church of *Antioch*, in the Reign of *Conſtantine*: But if we may believe *Socrates*, ſome hundred of Years before that, by *Ignatius*, who was Biſhop of that Church; who having in a Viſion heard the *Angels* praiſing the *Holy Trinity* with *alternate* Hymns, thereupon introduced the Uſe of it in that Church, which from thence ſpread itſelf into all other Churches; and whether *Pliny* (who lived about that time) might not mean ſome ſuch thing by his *Secum invicem canere*, that the *Chriſtians* ſung Hymns *one with another*, or *in their Courſes*, may be conſider'd by thoſe who think it worth their Labour to enquire. In the mean time we proceed: *The Reader having done*, (they are the Words of *Juſtin* the *Martyr*) *the Preſident of the Aſſembly makes a Sermon by way of Inſtruction and Exhortation, to the Imitation and Practice of thoſe excellent Things that they had heard.* And indeed *Sermons*, in thoſe *times*, were nothing elſe but the *Expoſitions* of ſome Part of the Scriptures which had been read before, and *Exhortations* to the People to obey the Doctrines contain'd in them; and commonly were upon the *Leſſon* which was *laſt* read, becauſe that being freſheſt in the People's Memory, was moſt proper to be treated of, as S. *Auguſtin* both avers the *Cuſtom*, and gives the *Reaſon*. Hence, in the Writers of the Church, Preachers came to be called *Tractatores*, and their Sermons *Tractatus*, becauſe they *handled* or treated of ſuch places of Scripture as had been a little before read unto the People. According as Occaſion

Chap. 9.

Theodoſius Hiſt. Eccl. l. 2. c. 24. p. 78.

Hiſt. Eccl. l. 6. c. 8. p. 313.

Loc. ſupra cit.

Serm. 237. de Temp. tom. 10. col. 1116.

Part. I. Occasion was, these Sermons were more or fewer, sometimes two or three at the same Assembly, made by the Presbyters first, and then the Bishop; as is expressly affirm'd in the *Apostolical Constitutions*: *Then* (i. e. after the Reading of the *Gospel*) *let the Presbyters exhort the People one by one, not all at once; and after all, the Bishop, as it is fitting for the Master to do.* And thus *Gregory Nyssen* excuses himself for not introducing his Sermons with a tedious *Preface*, because he would not be burdensome to the People who had already taken Pains to hear those admirable Discourses that had been made before him.

Ut supra, p. 876.

Εἰς τῆς ἑαυτῦ χειροτονίας. Tom. 1. p. 872.

This Course they held not in the *Morning* only, but likewise in the *Afternoon* (at some times at least) when they had their publick Prayers and Sermons to the People. This *Chrysostom* assures us of, in an *Homily* upon this very Subject, in Commendation of those who came to Church *after Dinner*, and that, as he tells them, in greater Numbers than before; who instead of *sleeping* after Dinner, came to hear the Divine Laws expounded unto them; instead of *walking upon the Exchange*, and entertaining themselves with idle and unprofitable Chat, came and stood amongst their Brethren, to converse with the Discourses of the *Prophets*. And this, he tells them, he puts them in Mind of; not that it was a Reproach to *eat* and *drink*, but that having done so, it was a Shame to *stay at home*, and deprive themselves of those Religious Solemnities. The same 'twere easy to make good from several Passages in S. *Basil*, S. *Augustin*, and others, who frequently refer to those Sermons which they had preached in the Morning.

Ἔπαινος τῶν μετὰ τὸν ἑσπερινὸν ἀπιωτηκότων εἰς τὸν ἀκρόασιν. Hom. 10. ad pop. Antioch. p. 116. tom. 1.

But how many soever the Discourses were, the People were ready enough to entertain them, flocking to them as to their Spiritual Meals and Banquets. *We meet together* (says *Tertullian*) *to hear the Holy Scriptures rehearsed to us, that so* (*according*

to

to the Quality of the Times) we may be either forewarned or corrected by them: For certainly with these Holy Words we nourish our Faith, *erect our* Hope, *seal our* Confidence; *and, by these Inculcations, are the better establish'd in Obedience to the Divine Commands.* Chap. 9. *Ap. c.* 39.

Nazianzen tells us what vast Numbers used to meet in his Church at *Constantinople*, of all Sexes, of all Sorts and Ranks of Persons, *Rich* and *Poor*, *Honourable* and *Ignoble*, *Learned* and *Simple*, *Governors* and *People*, *Soldiers* and *Tradesmen*; all here unanimously conspiring together, and greedily desirous to learn the Knowledge of Divine Things. *Orat.* 32. *p.* 517.

The like *Chrysostom* reports of the Church of *Antioch*, that they would set aside all Affairs at home, to come and hear Sermons at Church: He tells them, 'twas the great *Honour* of the City, not so much that it had large *Suburbs* and vast *Numbers* of People, or brave *Houses* with gilded Dining-rooms, as that it had a *diligent* and *attentive* People. *Hom.* 56. *tom.* 1. *p.* 623.

And elsewhere, that 'twas the great Encouragement of his Ministry, to see such a famous and chearful Concourse, a People so well order'd and desirous to hear: That 'twas this advanced their City above the Honour of a *Senate*, or the Office of a *Consul*, or the Variety of *Statues* and Ornaments, or the Plenty of its *Merchandize*, or the Commodiousness of its *Situation*; in that its People were so earnest to hear and learn, its Churches so throng'd and crowded, and all Persons inflamed with such an insatiable Desire of the Word that was preached to them; yea, that this it was that adorn'd the City, even above *Rome* itself. And indeed the Commendation is the greater, in that Commonness did not breed Contempt; it being usual in that Church (as *Chrysostom* often intimates) for a good Part of the Year to have Sermons every Day. *Hom.* 4. *in verb. Esaiæ vid. Dom. &c. to.* 3. *p.* 750.

Well,

Part I.

Well, *Sermon* being ended, *Prayers* were made with and for the *Catechumens*, *Penitents*, *Poſſeſſed*, and the like, according to their reſpective Capacities and Qualifications; the Perſons that were in every Rank departing as ſoon as the Prayer that particularly concern'd them was done; firſt the *Catechumens*, and then the *Penitents*; as is preſcribed in the nineteenth Canon of the *Laodicean* Council: For no ſooner was the Service thus far perform'd, but all that were under Baptiſm, or under the Diſcipline of Penance, *i. e.* all that might not communicate at the *Lord's Table*, were commanded to depart, the *Deacon* crying aloud, ΟΣΟΙ ΚΑΤΗΧΟΥ-ΜΕΝΟΙ ΠΡΟΕΛΘΕΤΕ, *Thoſe that are Catechumens go out*; in the *Latin* Church the Form was, ITE, MISSA EST; *Depart, there is a Diſmiſſion of you: Miſſa* being the ſame with *Miſſio*, as *remiſſa* oft uſed in ſome Writers for *remiſſio*, (and ſo the Word *Miſſa* is uſed by *Caſſian* even in his time, for the Diſmiſſion of the *Congregation.*) Hence it was that the whole Service, from the Beginning of it till the Time that the *Hearers* were *diſmiſſed*, came to be called *Miſſa Catechumenorum*, the *Maſs* or Service of the *Catechumens*; as that which was perform'd afterwards at the Celebration of the *Euchariſt* was called *Miſſa Fidelium*, the *Maſs*, or Service of the *Faithful*, becauſe none but they were preſent at it: And in theſe Notions, and no other, the Word is often to be met with in *Tertullian*, and other ancient Writers of the Church. 'Tis true, that in proceſs of Time, as the Diſcipline of the *Catechumens* wore out, ſo that Title which belonged to the firſt Part of the Service was forgotten, and the Name *Miſſa* was appropriated to the Service of the *Lord's Supper*; and accordingly was made uſe of by the Church of *Rome*, to denote that which they peculiarly call the *Maſs*, or the *Propitiatory* Sacrifice of the *Altar*, at this day. And the more plauſibly to impoſe this

Conſtit. Apoſt. l. 8. c. 6. p. 1006.

De Inſtit. Monach. l. 3. c. 7. p. 26.

this Deluſion upon the People, they do, with a great deal of Confidence, muſter up all thoſe Places of the Fathers where the Word *Miſſa* is to be found, and apply it to their *Maſs*; tho' it would puzzle them to produce but one Place, where the Word is uſed in the ſame Senſe as they uſe it now, out of any genuine and approved Writer of the Church, for at leaſt the firſt four hundred Years. But to return: The *Catechumens*, *&c.* being departed, and the Church-doors ſhut, they proceeded to the *Lord's Supper*, at which the *Faithful* only might be preſent; wherein they prayed for all States and Ranks of Men, gave the *Kiſs* of Charity, pray'd for *Conſecration* of the *Euchariſt*, then received the Sacramental Elements, made their Offerings, and ſuch like; of which I do not now ſpeak particularly, becauſe I intend to treat diſtinctly of the *Sacraments* afterwards. For the ſame Reaſon, I ſay nothing concerning their *Admonitions*, *Church-Cenſures*, *Abſolutions*, *&c.* becauſe theſe will come under Conſideration in another Place; as alſo, becauſe tho' managed at their Publick Aſſemblies, they were yet only accidental to them, and no ſettled Parts of the Divine Service. This, in ſhort, was the general Form of Publick Worſhip in thoſe ancient times; which, altho' it might vary ſomewhat according to *Times* and *Places*, did yet for the Main and the Subſtance of it hold in all. Chap. 9.

That which remains, is, a little to remark how the *Chriſtians* carry'd themſelves in the Diſcharge of theſe ſolemn Duties; which certainly was with ſingular *Reverence* and *Devotion*, ſuch *Geſtures* and *Actions* as they conceived might expreſs the greateſt *Piety* and *Humility*. Let both Men and Women, (ſays *Clemens* of *Alexandria*) come to Church in *comely* Apparel, with a *grave* Pace, with a modeſt *Silence*, with a *Love* unfeigned, *chaſte* both in Body and Mind, and ſo as they may be fit to put up *Pædag. l.* 3. *c.* 11. *p.* 255.

Prayers

Part I. Prayers to God. Let our *Speech* in Prayer (ſays *Cyprian*) be under Diſcipline, obſerving a *decorous* Calmneſs and Modeſty: We are to remember that we are under the Eye of God, whom we are not to offend either in the *Habit* of our Body, or the *Manner* of our Speech; for as 'tis the Faſhion of thoſe that are impudent to clamour and make a Noiſe; ſo on the contrary, it becomes a ſober Man to pray with a *modeſt* Voice. When therefore we come together with our Brethren into the Aſſembly, to celebrate the Divine *Sacrifices*, with the Miniſter of God, we ought to be mindful of *Order*, and a reverent Regard, and not to throw about our Prayers with a *wild* and *confuſed* Voice, or with a diſorderly Prattling to caſt forth thoſe Petitions which ought with the greateſt Modeſty to be put up to God. The Men pray'd with their *Heads bare*, as not aſhamed to look up to Heaven for what they begg'd of God; the Women *cover'd*, as a Sign of the *Modeſty* of that Sex; and therefore *Tertullian* ſeverely checks the Practice of ſome Women in his time, who in time of Worſhip had no Covering on their Heads, or what was as good as none: What Reproof (ſays he) do they deſerve, that continue *unveil'd* in ſinging Pſalms, or in any Mention of God? Or do they think it's enough to lay ſome thin and ſlight Thing over their Heads in Prayer, and then think themſelves cover'd? Where he manifeſtly refers to thoſe Rules which the Apoſtle preſcribes in this Caſe; and concludes at laſt, that they ſhould at all Times and in all Places be mindful of the Rule, being ready and provided againſt all Mentions of the Name of God; who if he be in Womens *Hearts*, will be known on their *Heads*, *viz.* by a modeſt *Carriage* and *Covering* of them in their Addreſſes to him. Their Hands they did not only lift up to Heaven (a Poſture in Prayer common both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*) but they did

De Orat. Dom. p. 188.

De Virg. veland. p. 504.

did *expand* and spread them abroad, that so by this Means they might shadow out an *Image of the Cross*, or rather a Resemblance of him that hung upon it, as *Tertullian* more than once and again informs us. Prayer (says another) is a Conversing with God, and the Way to Heaven; and to stretch out our Hands, is to form the Resemblance of *Christ Crucified*, which, whoever prays, should do, not only as to the Form and Figure, but in Reality and Affection: For as he that is fasten'd to the Cross surely dies, so he that prays should *crucify* the Desires of the Flesh, and every inordinate Lust and Passion. In the performing of this Duty, they either *kneeled* (which was most usual) or *stood* which they always did upon the *Lord's-day*, for a Reason which we have spoken of before; *Sitting* was ever held a Posture of great *Rudeness* and *Irreverence*. Nay, *Tertullian* falls heavy upon some that used presently to clap themselves down upon their Seats, as soon as ever Prayer was done, and down-right charges it as against Scripture: If it be an irreverent Thing (as he argues) to sit down before, or over-against a Person for whom thou hast mighty Reverence and Veneration, how much more does it savour of *Irreligion* to do so in the Presence of the *living God*, while the *Angel* is yet standing by thee to carry up the Prayer to Heaven? unless we have a Mind to *reproach* God to his Face, and tell him that we are weary of the Duty.

Chap. 9.

De Orat. c. 11. *Apol. c.* 39. *Asterius Amasen. Hom. de precat. apud Phot. Cod.* 271. *col.* 1496.

De Orat. c. 12. *p.* 134.

Another Custom which they had in Prayer, was, that they constantly pray'd towards the *East*. This was so universally common, that there's scarce any ancient Ecclesiastical Writer but speaks of it; tho' not many of them agree in assigning the Reason of it. The Custom doubtless began very early, and is generally ascribed to the *Apostles*; so the Author of the *Questions* and *Answers* assures us, and tells us, it was because the *East* was accounted the most excellent

Quæs. 118. *p.* 471.

Part I. cellent Part of the Creation; and ſeeing in Prayer we muſt turn our Faces towards ſome Quarter, 'twas fitteſt it ſhould be towards the *Eaſt*. Juſt (ſays he) as in making the Sign of the *Croſs* in the Name of *Chriſt*, we uſe the Right-hand, becauſe 'tis better than the Left, not in its own Nature, but only in its *Poſiture* and *Fitneſs* for our Uſe. S. *Baſil* likewiſe reckons it amongſt the *Traditions* that had been derived from the *Apoſtles*; but tells us the *Myſtery* of it was, that thereby they reſpected *Paradiſe*, which God planted in the *Eaſt*, begging of him that they might be reſtored to that ancient Country from whence they had been caſt out. This might probably be with thoſe who dwelt in the *Weſtern* Parts of the World; but how it could be done by thoſe who lived *Eaſt* of the Garden of *Eden* (ſuppoſe in any Parts of *India*) I am not able to imagine. *Clemens Alexandrinus* tells us, that herein they had Reſpect to *Chriſt*; for as the *Eaſt* is the Birth and Womb of the Natural Day, from whence the *Sun* (the Fountain of all ſenſible Light) does ariſe and ſpring; ſo *Chriſt* the true *Son of Righteouſneſs*, who aroſe upon the World with the *Light* of Truth, when it ſat in the *Darkneſs* of Error and Ignorance, is in Scripture ſtyled the *Eaſt*; and therefore our Prayers are directed thither. For which Reaſon, *Tertullian* calls the *Eaſt* the *Figure*, or the *Type* of *Chriſt*. But whatever the true Reaſon was, I'm ſure 'tis a ſober Account which *Athanaſius* gives of it: *We do not* (ſays he) *worſhip towards the* Eaſt, *as if we thought God any ways ſhut up in thoſe Parts of the World, but becauſe God is in himſelf, and is ſo ſtyled in Scripture, the* true Light; *in turning therefore towards that* created Light, *we do not worſhip it, but the great* Creator *of it; taking* Occaſion *from that moſt excellent Element to adore that God who was before all Elements and Ages of the World.* This was their Carriage for Prayer; nor were

De Spir. S. c. 27. p. 352. tom. 2.

Athanaſ. ad Antioch. quæſt. 37. p. 285. tom. 2.

Conſt. Ap. l. 2. c. 57. p. 876.

Strom. l. 7. p. 724.

Contr. Valent. c. 3. p. 251.

Ubi ſupr. p. 284.

were they less humble and reverent in other Parts of Worship; they heard the Scriptures read and preached with all possible *Gravity* and *Attention*; which that they might the better do, they were wont to *stand* all the while the *Sermon* continued, none sitting then but the Bishop and Presbyters that were about him. So *Optatus* expresly tells us, That the People had no Privilege to *sit down* in the Church; tho' whether the Custom was universally so in all Places, I much doubt. Nay, S. *Augustin* tells us, That in some *transmarine* (I suppose he means the *Western*) Churches it was otherwise, the *People* having Seats placed for them as well as the *Ministers*. But generally the People *stood*, partly to express the greater *Reverence*, partly to keep their Attentions *awake* and *lively*. Hence it was part of the *Deacon's* Office (as *Chrysostom* tells us, and the same we find in the ancient *Greek Liturgies*) to call upon the People with an ΟΡΘΟΙ ΣΤΩΜΕΝ ΚΑΛΩΣ, *Let us duly stand upright*; respecting the *decent* Posture of their *Bodies*, tho' withal principally intending the *Elevation* of their *Minds*, the lifting up their Thoughts from low sordid Objects, to those Spiritual and Divine Things they were then conversant about. But whatever they did in other Parts of the Publick Service, they constantly stood up at the Reading of the *Gospel*; a Custom generally embraced in all Parts of the Christian World. Therefore *Sozomen*, discoursing of the various Rites observed in several Churches, notes it as an unusual thing in the Bishop of *Alexandria*, that he did not rise up when the Gospels were read; a Thing (says he) which I never saw nor heard of in any other Place. And *Philostorgius* tells us of *Theophilus*, the *Indian* Bishop, that amongst several *Irregularities* which he corrected in those Churches, he particularly reformed this, that the People were wont to *sit* while the *Lessons* out of the Gospel were read

Chap. 9.

De Schism. Donat. l. 4. p. 115.

De Catech. Rudib. c. 13. tom. 4. col. 907.

De incomparab. Dei natur. hom. 4. p. 353. tom. 1.

Hist. Eccl. l. 7. c. 19. p. 734.

Hist. Eccl. l. 3. num. 5. p. 29.

Part I. to them. Nor did the greatest Persons think themselves too high to express this piece of Reverence in their Attendance upon the King of Kings. 'Tis very memorable what we read concerning the great *Constantine*, that when upon occasion *Eusebius* was to make a *Panegyrick* concerning the *Sepulchre* of our Saviour, tho' it was not in the *Church*, but in the *Palace*, yet he refused to *sit* all the Time; and when *Eusebius* beseeched him to sit down in his *Throne*, that was hard by him, he would not; but attentively heard, judged, and approved those Things that were spoken. And when after a good while, the *Sermon* having been prolix, *Eusebius* out of Compliance would have broken off and done, he called to him to go on till he came to the full End of his Discourse; whereupon he was again solicited to sit down, but refused, *Affirming it to be unfit to attend upon any Discourse concerning God, and much more at this time, with Ease and Softness; and that it was very consonant to Piety and Religion, that Discourses about Divine Things should be heard standing.* So great a Reverence had that *excellent* Prince for the Solemnities of Divine Worship. In the Discharge of these holy Exercises, as they carry'd themselves with all Seriousness and Gravity, so they *continued* in them till they were completely *finish'd*; there was then no such Airiness and Levity as now possesses the Minds of Men; no *Snatching* at some Pieces of the Worship, *tanquam Canis ad Nilum*, and gone again; no rude disorderly departing the Congregation, till the whole Worship and Service of God was over. And therefore when this Warmth and Vigour of the first Ages was a little abated, the Council of *Orleans* thought good to re-establish the Primitive Devotion by this Canon,

De vit. Const. l. 4. c. 33. p. 542.

Can. 22. *That when the People came together for the Celebration of Divine Service, they should not depart till the whole Solemnity was over, and the Bishop or Presbyter had given the Blessing.*

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Of Baptism, and the Administration of it in the Primitive Church.

Four Circumstances consider'd. Baptism, by whom administred. By none usually without the Leave of the Bishop. The great Controversy about re-baptizing those that had been baptized by Hereticks. An Account of it out of Cyprian. *Lay-men how suffer'd to baptize. The Opinion of the absolute Necessity of Baptism. The Case of* Athanasius's *baptizing when but a Child. Women never permitted to baptize. Persons to be baptized, who. Infants. Sufficient Evidence for Infant-Baptism in the ancient Writers of the Church. Some Passages out of* Cyprian *noted. The Baptized most-what Adult Persons. The stated Times of Baptism,* Easter *and* Whitsuntide, *and why: Especially upon* Easter-Eve, *and why. In Cases of Necessity at any other time.* Clinici, *who. Clinic Baptism accounted less perfect, why. Usual to defer Baptism till a Death-bed, and the Reason of it noted in* Constantine *and others.* Being baptized for the Dead, *what (probably.) The usual Place of Baptism in, or near the Church; always before the Congregation. The* Baptisterium, *or Font, where it stood, and how large. Its distinct Apartments for Men and Women. A Curiosity in many of those times of being baptized in* Jordan, *and why. The Manner of the Administration.*

Part I.

The Person baptized look'd towards the West, and why. Their answering as to the Profession of their Faith. Their solemn Abrenunciation made twice, and the Form of it. Sureties in Baptism. Persons baptized Exorcised; what meant by it. Unction, upon what Account used; several Reasons of it assign'd by the Fathers. The Sign of the Cross made in Baptism, evident out of the ancient Fathers. Of Immersion or putting the Person under Water; what it shadow'd out. Generally in use in those Countries: Not absolutely necessary in others. Trine Immersion: Different Reasons of it assign'd by the Fathers. It obtain'd not in Spain, *and why. A second Unction. Persons after Baptism clothed in white Garments, and why. These kept in the Church as a Testimony of their solemn Engagements. A memorable Passage out of* Victor Uticensis. *A brief Account of Confirmation. The Neglect of it bewailed.*

OUR Lord having instituted Baptism and the Lord's Supper as the two great *Sacraments* of the *Christian* Law, they have accordingly been ever accounted principal Parts of Publick Worship in the Christian Church: We shall treat first of *Baptism*, as being the *Door* by which Persons enter in, the great and solemn Rite of our Initiation into the Faith of Christ; concerning which, four Circumstances are chiefly to be enquired into; the *Persons* by, and upon whom; the *Time* when, the *Place* where, the *Manner* how this Sacrament was administred in the ancient Church.

For

For the *Persons* by whom this Sacrament was administred, they were the *Ministers of the Gospel*, the *Stewards of the Mysteries of Christ*, baptizing and preaching the Gospel being joined together by our *Saviour* in the same Commission: Usually 'twas done by the Bishop, the προεστὼς in *J. Martyr*, the *Antistes* in *Tertullian*, the *President* or chief Minister of the Congregation, the *Summus Sacerdos, qui est Episcopus*, as he calls him, without whose Leave and Authority neither *Presbyters* nor *Deacons* might take upon them to *baptize*, as not only *Ignatius* but *Tertullian* expresly tells us; and if they did, it was only in case of Necessity, as is affirm'd by an ancient Author, who lived in or near the time of *Cyprian*. The same, S. *Hierom* assures us, was the Custom of his time; tho' otherwhiles we find the Bishop to begin the Action, and the Presbyters to carry it on and finish it. But as Christianity increased, this became a more familiar Part of the *Presbyters* and the *Deacons* Office, and doubtless had been more or less executed by them from the Beginning; tho' out of Reverence to the Bishop, and to preserve the *Honour* of the Church (as *Tertullian* gives the Reason) they did it not without his *Leave* and Deputation; and 'tis certain that *Philip* baptized the *Eunuch*, who yet was of no higher Order than that of *Deacon*. Nor was it accounted enough by some in those times, that Baptism was conferr'd by a Person called to the Ministry, unless he was also *orthodox* in the Faith. This became Matter of great Bustle in the Church: Hence sprang that famous Controversy between *Cyprian* and *Stephen* Bishop of *Rome*, concerning the *re-baptizing* those that had been baptized by *Hereticks*, (of which there is so much in *Cyprian*'s Writings) *Cyprian* asserting, that they ought to be re-baptized, the other as stiffly maintaining it to be both against the *Doctrine* and *Practice* of the

Epist. ad Smyrneos, p. 6. De Bap. c. 17. p. 230. De non rebapt. apud Cypr. p. 138 Dial. adv. Lucifer. p. 139. Ambr. de Sacram. l. 3. c. 1.

Part I. Church. This begot great Heats and Feuds between those good Men, and engaged a great Part of the whole Christian Church in the Quarrel; *Cyprian* endeavouring to strengthen his Cause, not only by Arguments from Scripture, but by calling a Council at *Carthage* of eighty seven *African Bishops*, who all concluded for his Opinion. How truly *Cyprian* maintained this, I am not concern'd to enquire; only I take Notice of two things which he and his Followers pleaded, by way of Abatement to the *Rigour* of their Opinion. First, That hereby they did not assert *Re-baptization* to be lawful, this they expresly deny to receive any Patronage from their Practice; for they looked upon that Baptism that had been conferr'd by Hereticks as *null* and *invalid*, (seeing Hereticks being out of the Church could not *give* what they *had* not) and therefore when any return'd to the Union of the Church, they could not properly be said to be re-baptized, seeing they did but receive what (*lawfully*) they had not before. Secondly, That they did not promiscuously baptize all that came over from Heretical Churches; for where any had been lawfully baptized, by *Orthodox* Ministers before their going over to them, these they received at their Return without any other Ceremony than *Imposition of Hands*; baptizing those only who never had any other Baptism than that which Hereticks had conferr'd upon them. *Cyprian* being thus severe against Baptism dispensed by *Heretical* Ministers, we may wonder what he thought of that which was administred by mere *Lay un-ordain'd Persons*, which yet was not uncommon in those times; for that Laymen (provided they were Christians and baptized themselves) might, and did baptize others in Cases of Necessity, is so positively asserted by *Tertullian*, *Hierom*, and others, that no Man can doubt of it. A Custom ratify'd by the Fathers of the *Illiberine* Council,

Cypr. ep. ad Quint. de Hæret. bapt. ep. 71. p. 119. & Conc. Carth. apud Cypr. sent. 35. p. 286.

Cypr. ib. & Conc. Carth. sent. 8. & Cyril. præf. Catech. ad Illum. p. 9.

Locis antea citat.

Council, with this *Proviſo*, That if the Perſons ſo baptized, lived, they ſhould receive *Confirmation* from the Biſhop. This, without queſtion, aroſe from an Opinion they had of the abſolute and indiſpenſable *Neceſſity* of Baptiſm, without which they ſcarce thought a Man's future Condition could be ſafe; and that therefore it was better it ſhould be had from any, than to depart this Life without it; for, excepting the Caſe of *Martyrs*, (whom they thought ſufficiently qualify'd for Heaven, by being *baptized* in their own *Blood*, inſiſting upon a two-fold Baptiſm, one of *Water* in time of Peace, another of *Blood* in the time of Perſecution, anſwerable to the *Water* and *Blood* that flowed out of our *Saviour*'s Side: Excepting theſe) they reckon'd no Man could be ſaved without being baptized, and cared not much in Caſes of Neceſſity, ſo they had it, how they came by it. As for the Act of *Athanaſius* (mention'd by the Author of his Life, in *Photius*, and more largely related by *Sozomen*) when a Boy, playing with the reſt of his Companions, they form'd themſelves into a kind of Church-Society, *Athanaſius* was choſen Biſhop, and others perſonated the *Catechumens*, ready to be baptized; and were accordingly, with all the uſual Formalities, baptized by *Athanaſius*. This Juvenile Ceremony being ended, they were brought before *Alexander*, the then Biſhop of *Alexandria*, (who had himſelf beheld the whole *Scene*) who enquiring into the Reaſons and Circumſtances of the Action; and having conſulted with his Clergy that were about him, concluded that thoſe Children ought not to be *re-baptized*, and therefore only added his Confirmation to them. But this being only a particular Caſe, and the like not mention'd, that I remember, by any Writer of thoſe Times, I only relate it as I find it. But tho' this Power, in Caſes of Neceſſity, was allow'd

Chap. 10 *Can.* 38.

Cyril. ad Illum. Catech. 3. *p.* 61.

Cod. 258. *col.* 1429. *Hiſt. Eccl. l.* 2. *c.* 17. *p.* 467.

Part I.

to *Men* (who were capable of having the Ministerial Office conferr'd upon them) yet was it ever deny'd to *Women*, whom the Apostle has so expresly forbidden to exercise any Ministry *in the Church of God*; and accordingly censured in the *Apostolical Constitutions*, to be not only *dangerous*, but *unlawful* and *impious*. Indeed in the Churches of the Hereticks, Women even in those times took upon them to baptize; but it was universally condemn'd and cry'd out against by the Orthodox, and constantly affix'd as a Note of Dishonour and Reproach upon the Heretical Parties of those times; as abundantly appears from *Tertullian*, *Epiphanius*, and others, who record the Heretical Doctrines and Practices of those first Ages of the Church; however afterwards it crept in, in some Places, and is allow'd and practised in the Church of *Rome* at this Day; where in Cases of Necessity, they give Leave that it may be administred by any, and in any Language, whether the Person administring be a *Clergy* or a *Lay-man*, (yea tho' under *Excommunication*) whether he be a *Believer* or an *Infidel*, a *Catholick* or an *Heretick*, a *Man* or a *Woman*; only taking care, that (if it may be) a *Priest* be preferr'd before a *Deacon*, a *Deacon* before a *Sub-deacon*, a *Clergyman* before a *Laic*, and a *Man* before a *Woman*; together with some other Cases which are there wisely provided for.

Tert. de Bapt. c. 17. De vel. virg. c. 9. De præscr. adv. hæret. c. 41. Epiph. hær. 49. & hær. 79.

Rit. Rom. de Sacr. Baptism. Rubric. de minist. Bapt. p. 9.

From the Persons *ministring*, we proceed to the Persons upon whom it was *conferr'd*; and they were of two sorts, *Infants* and *Adult* Persons. How far the Baptizing of Infants is included in our *Saviour*'s Institution, is not my Work to dispute; but certainly, if in controverted Cases the constant Practice of the Church, and those who immediately succeeded the Apostles, be (as no Man can deny it is) the best Interpreter of the Laws of Christ, the Dispute one would think should

ſhould be at an End: For that it always was the Cuſtom to receive the Children of *Chriſtian Parents* into the Church by Baptiſm, we have ſufficient Evidence from the greateſt part of the moſt early Writers, *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *Origen*, *Cyprian*, &c. whoſe Teſtimonies I do not produce, becauſe I find them collected by others, and the Argument thence ſo forcible and concluſive, that the moſt zealous Oppoſers of *Infant-Baptiſm* know not how to evade it; the Teſtimonies being ſo clear, and not the leaſt Shadow that I know of in thoſe Times of any thing to make againſt it. There was indeed in *Cyprian*'s Time a Controverſy about the baptizing of Infants, not *whether* they ought to be baptized (for of that there was no doubt) but concerning the *Time* when it was to be adminiſtred; whether on the *ſecond*, or *third*, or whether, as *Circumciſion* of old, to be deferred till the *eighth* Day. For the determining of which, *Cyprian*, ſitting in Council with ſixty ſix Biſhops, writes a *Synodical* Epiſtle to *Fidus*, to let him know, That it was not neceſſary to be deferred ſo long, and that it was their univerſal Judgment and Reſolution, that the *Mercy* and *Grace* of God was not to be denied to any, tho' as ſoon as he was *born*: Concluding, that it was the Sentence of the Council, that none ought to be forbidden Baptiſm and the Grace of God; which as it was to be obſerved and retained towards all Men, ſo *much more* towards *Infants* and *new-born* Children. And that this Sentence of theirs was no *novel* Doctrine, S. *Auguſtine* aſſures us, where ſpeaking concerning this *Synodical* Determination, he tells us, that in this *Cyprian* did not make any new Decree, but kept the Faith of the Church moſt firm and ſure. I ſhall only take Notice of one Place more out of *Cyprian*, which methinks evidently makes for this Purpoſe; where deſcribing the great Wickedneſs and miſerable Condition of the *Lapſed*,

J. G. Voſſ. de Bapt. diſp. 14. p. 178. & ſeq. Forbeſ. Inſtruct. Hiſt. Theol. l. 10 c. 5. ſect. 14. & ſeq. Dr. Hammond's Defence of Infant-Baptiſm, c. 4. ſect. 2.

Ep. 60. p. 97.

Ep. 28. ad Hierom. to. 2. col. 108.

De lapſis, p. 171.

Part I. *Lapsed*, such as to avoid Persecution had done Sacrifice to the Idols, he urges this as one of the last and highest Aggravations; That by their Apostasy their Infants and Children were exposed to Ruin, and *had lost that which they had obtained at their first coming into the World* (which whether he means it of their *Right* to Baptism, or their having been actually baptized, and losing the *Fruit* and *Benefit* of their Baptism, is all one to my Purpose) and therefore he brings them in thus elegantly pleading against their *Parents* at the Great Day: *'Twas no Fault of ours, we did not of ourselves forsake the Sacraments of our Lord, and run over to join with prophane Impieties; the Unfaithfulness of others has undone us, we have found our Parents to be Murderers; they denied us God for our Father, and the Church for our Mother: For while we alas were little, unable to take any Care of ourselves, and ignorant of so great a Wickedness, we were ensnared by the Treachery of others, and by them betrayed into a Partnership of their Impieties!*

This was the Case of Infants; but those who made up the main Body of the Baptized in those Days were *adult* Persons, who flocking over daily in great Numbers to the Faith of Christ, were received in at this Door. Usually they were for some considerable time *catechized*, and trained up in the Principles of the Christian Faith, till having given Testimony of their Proficiency in Knowledge (to the Bishop or Presbyter, who were appointed to take their Examination, and to whom they were to give an Account once a Week of what they had learnt) and of a sober and regular Conversation, they then became *Candidates* for Baptism, and were accordingly taken in: Which brings me to the next Circumstance considerable, concerning

Conc. Lao. Can. 46.

The *Time* when Baptism was wont to be administred. At first all Times were alike, and Persons were baptized as Opportunity and Occasion

sion served; but the Discipline of the Church being a little settled, it began to be restrained to two solemn and stated Times of the Year, *viz.* *Easter* and *Whitsuntide*. At *Easter*, in Memory of Christ's *Death* and *Resurrection*, correspondent unto which are the two Parts of the Christian Life represented and shadowed out in Baptism, *dying* unto Sin, and *rising* again unto Newness of Life; in order to which, the Parties to be baptized were to prepare themselves by a strict Observation of *Lent*, disposing and fitting themselves for Baptism by Fasting and Prayer. In some Places, particularly the Churches of *Thessaly*, *Easter* was the only Time for *Baptism* (as *Socrates* tells us) which was the Reason why many amongst them died unbaptized: But this was no Usage peculiar to them alone. The ancient Custom of the Church (as *Zonaras* tells us) was for Persons to be baptized, especially upon the *Saturday* before *Easter-Day*; the Reason whereof was, that this being the *great* or *holy Sabbath*, and the Mid-time between the Day whereon Christ was buried, and that whereon he rose again, did fitliest correspond with the Mystery of Baptism, as it is the Type and Representation both of our Lord's *Burial* and *Resurrection*. At *Whitsuntide*, in Memory of the *Holy Ghost*'s being shed upon the *Apostles*; the same being in some measure represented and conveyed in Baptism. When I say that these were the two fixed Times of Baptism, I do not strictly mean it of the precise Days of *Easter* and *Whitsuntide*, but also of the whole intermediate Space of fifty Days that is between them, which was in a Manner accounted *Festival*, and Baptism administred during the whole Time, as I have formerly noted. Besides these, *Nazianzen* reckons the Feast of *Epiphany* as an annual Time of Baptism, probably in Memory either of the *Birth* or *Baptism* of our Saviour, both which ancient-

Chap. 10

Tert. de Bap. c. 19. p. 232.

Cyril. præf. Catech. ad Illum. p. 6.

Hist. Eccl. l. 5. c. 22. p. 287.

In Can. 45. Conc. Lao.

Εἰς τὰ ἅγ. Βαπτ. *Orat. 40. p. 654.*

Part I. anciently went under that Title. This might be the Custom in some Places, but I question whether it was universal; besides that, afterwards, it was prohibited and laid aside. But though Persons in Health, and the Space that was requisite for the Instruction of the *Catechumens*, might well enough comport with these annual Returns; yet if there was a *Necessity* (as in Case of *Sickness* and Danger of *Death*) they might be baptized at any other time. For finding themselves at any time surprized with a dangerous or a mortal Sickness, and not daring to pass into another World without this *Badge* of their Initiation into Christ; they presently signified their earnest Desire to be baptized, which was accordingly done, as well as the Circumstances of a sick Bed would permit. These were called *Clinici* (of whom there is frequent mention in the ancient Writers of the Church) because ἐν τῇ κλίνῃ βαπτιζόμενοι, baptized as they lay along in their Beds. This was accounted a less solemn and perfect kind of Baptism, partly because it was done not by *Immersion*, but by *Sprinkling*; partly because Persons were supposed at such a time to desire it, chiefly out of a *Fear* of Death, and many times when not thorowly *Masters* of their Understandings. For which Reasons Persons so baptized
Can. 12. (if they recovered) are by the Fathers of the *Neocæsarean* Council rendered ordinarily incapable of being admitted to the Degree of *Presbyters* in the Church. Indeed 'twas very usual in those times (notwithstanding that the Fathers did solemnly and smartly declaim against it) for Persons to defer their being baptized till they were near their Death, out of a kind of *Novatian* Principle, that if they fell into Sin after Baptism, there would be no Place for Repentance; mistaking that Place of the *Apostle*, where 'tis said, that *if they who have been once enlightened*, (ἅπαξ φωτισθέντας, which the

the Ancients generally understand of *Baptism*) *fall away, 'tis impossible to renew them again unto Repentance.* For some such Reason we may suppose it was, that *Constantine* the Great deferred his Baptism till he lay a dying; the same which *Socrates* relates of his Son *Constantius*, baptized a little before his Death. And the like he reports of the Emperor *Theodosius*, who apprehending himself to be arrested with a mortal Sickness, presently caused himself to be baptized, though he recovered afterwards. To this Custom of *Clinic Baptism*, some not improbably think the Apostle has Reference in that famous Place, where he speaks of those that are *baptized for the Dead*, ὑπὲρ νεκρῶν, which they expound with Reference to the *State of the Dead*; and that 'tis meant of such, who in Danger of Death would be baptized, that it might fare well with them after Death. This *Epiphanius* thinks the truest Interpretation, that it's meant of *Catechumens*; who being suddenly surprized with Death, would be baptized, that so their Sins being remitted in Baptism, they might go hence under the Hope of that Eternal Life which awaits good Men after Death, and testify their Belief and Expectation of their future happy Resurrection. Others think it may refer to the Place of Baptism, those who are baptized ὑπὲρ νεκρῶν, *over the Graves*, or Sepulchres of the Dead; it being an ancient and general Custom to have their religious Meetings, and to perform their publick Exercises at the *Tombs* of *Martyrs*; there being numerous Instances in the *Acts* of the *Martyrs*, of such as were baptized in the *Cœmiteria* over the *Monuments* of the *Dead*. Which soever of these is most suitable, yet certainly either of them is far more probable than that which many talk so much of, as if the Apostle meant it of a *Custom* common in those Primitive Times amongst the *Cerinthians*, and other Hereticks; where when any died without Baptism,

Chap. 10

Euseb. de vit. Const. l. 4. c. 61, 62. p. 557.

Hist. Eccl. l. 2. c. 47. p. 161.

Lib. 5. c. 6. p. 262.

Vid. Voss. Thes. de Baptism. p. 161. & de Resur. Thes. 18.

Hæres. 28. p. 54. Vid. Mat. Blast. Syntag. c. 1. lit. B. p. 41.

Vid. Prud. Peristeph. hymn. 8. p. 110.

Part I.

tism, they used to place another under his *Bed*, who was baptized for him in his Stead, whence *Tertullian* calls it a *vicarious Baptism*; it being highly improbable, That the Great Apostle would fetch an Argument to confirm so solemn and fundamental a Principle of the Christian Faith, as the Doctrine of the *Resurrection* is, from such an absurd and ridiculous Rite, used only by the *worst* of Hereticks. But this only by the way.

Vid. Epiph. hæres. 28. contra Cerinth. p. 54. De resur. carn. c. 48.

For the *Place* where this solemn Action was performed, it was first unlimited, any Place where there was Water, as *Justin Martyr* tells us, in Ponds and Lakes, at Springs or Rivers, as *Tertullian* speaks; but always as near as might be to the Place of their Publick Assemblies, for it was seldom done without the Presence of the *Congregation*: And that for very good Reason, both as 'tis a principal Act of religious Worship, and as 'tis initiating of Persons into the Church, which therefore ought to be as publick as it could, that so the whole Congregation might be Spectators and Witnesses of that Profession and Engagement which the Person baptized then took upon him. And this they so zealously kept to, that the *Trullan* Council allows not Baptism to be administred in a private *Chappel*, but only in the publick Churches; punishing the Persons offending, if *Clergy* with *Deposition*, if *Laity* with *Excommunication*; which yet (as both *Zonaras* and *Balsamon* expound the *Canon*) is to be understood, unless it be done with the Leave and Approbation of the Bishop of the *Dioceſs*. For this Reason they had afterwards their *Baptisteria*, (or as we call them) *Fonts*, built at first near the Church, then in the Church-Porch, to represent Baptism's being the *Entrance* into the mystical Church; afterwards they were placed in the Church itself. They were usually very large and capacious,

Ap. 2. p. 93. De Bapt. c. 4.

Can. 59.

capacious, not only that they might comport with the genenal Cuſtoms of thoſe Times, of Perſons baptized being *immerſed* or put under Water; but becauſe the ſtated Times of Baptiſm returning ſo ſeldom, great Multitudes were uſually baptized at the ſame time. In the Middle of the *Font* there was a *Partition*, the one Part for Men, the other for Women, that to avoid Offence and Scandal they might be baptized aſunder. Here it was that this great Rite was commonly performed, tho' in caſes of Neceſſity they diſpenſed with private Baptiſm, as in the Caſe of thoſe that were *ſick* or ſhut up in Priſon, of which there were frequent Inſtances in times of Perſecution. Many there were in thoſe Days (ſuch eſpecially as lived in the Parts near unto it) whom nothing would ſerve, unleſs they might be baptized in *Jordan*, out of a Reverence to that Place where our Saviour himſelf had been baptized: This, *Conſtantine* tells us, he had a long time reſolved upon to be baptized in *Jordan*, though God cut him ſhort of his Deſire. And *Euſebius* elſewhere relates, that at *Bethabara*, *beyond* Jordan, *where* John *baptized*, there was a Place whither very many, even in his time, uſed to reſort, earneſtly deſiring to obtain their Baptiſm in that Place. This doubtleſs proceeded from a very devout and pious Mind, though otherwiſe one Place can contribute nothing more than another; nothing being truer than what *Tertullian* has obſerved in this Caſe, *That it's no Matter whether we be baptized amongſt thoſe whom* John *baptized in* Jordan, *or whom* Peter *baptized in* Tyber.

Chap. 10

De vita Conſt. l. 4. c. 62. Euſ. de loc. Heb. in voce Βηθαβαρᾶ. *p.* 59.

De Bapt. c. 4. p. 225.

The laſt Circumſtance I propounded, concerns the Manner of the Celebration of this Sacrament, and for this we may obſerve, that in the *Apoſtles* Age Baptiſm was adminiſtred with great Nakedneſs and Simplicity, probably without any more Formality than a ſhort Prayer, and repeating the Words of Inſtitution:

Part I. Institution: And indeed it could not well be otherwise, considering the vast Numbers that many Times were then baptized at once. But After-Ages added many Rites, differing very often according to Time and Place: I shall not undertake to give an Account of all, but only of the most remarkable, and such as did generally obtain in those Times; keeping as near as I can to the Order which they observed in the Administration, which usually was thus: Persons having past through the State of the *Catechumens*, and being now ripe for *Baptism*, made it their Request to the Bishop that they may be baptized: Whereupon, at the solemn Times they were brought to the Entrance of the *Baptistery* or *Font*, and standing with their Faces towards the *West* (which being directly opposite to the *East*, the Place of *Light*, did symbolically represent the Prince of *Darkness*, whom they were to renounce and defy) were commanded to stretch out their Hand as it were in Defiance of him. In this Posture they were interrogated by the Bishop concerning their breaking off all their former Leagues and Commerce with Sin, and the Powers of Hell, the *Bishop* asking, *Dost thou renounce the Devil and all his Works, Powers, and Service?* To which the Party answered, *I do renounce them. Dost thou renounce the World, and all its Pomps and Pleasures?* Answ. *I do renounce them.* This *Renunciation* was made twice, once before the *Congregation* (probably at their obtaining leave to be baptized) and presently after at the *Font*, or Place of Baptism, as *Tertullian* witnesseth. Next, they make an open *Confession* of their Faith, the Bishop asking, *Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty*, &c. *in Jesus Christ his only Son, who*, &c. *dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholick Church, and in one Baptism of Repentance for the Remission of Sins, and Life everlasting?* To all which the Person answered, *I do believe.* This Form of Interrogation

Cyril. Hieros. Catec. myst. 1. p. 506. & seq. Vid. Dion. Areop. de Eccl. Hierarch. c. 2. p. 253. Ambr. de Sacram. l. 1. c. 2. tom. 4. p. 429.

De cor. mil. c. 3. p. 102. De Spect. c. 13. p. 79. Vid. Const. Apost. l. 7. c. 4. p. 993.

terrogation seems to have been very ancient in the Church, and the Apostle is justly thought to refer to it, when he styles Baptism, *the Answer of a good Conscience towards God*, which can reasonably refer to nothing so well as that common Custom of *answering* in Baptism. These Answers and Actions in the *Adult* were done by the Persons themselves, in *Children* by their *Sponsores*, as *Tertullian* calls them, their *Sureties* and Undertakers; for that both Infants and adult Persons had those that undertook for them at their Baptism, is so notoriously known, that it were impertinent to insist upon it. After this there was a kind of *Exorcism*, and *Insufflation* or Breathing in the Face of the Person baptized (which S. *Augustin* calls a most ancient *Tradition* of the Church) by which they signified the Expelling of the Evil Spirit, and the Breathing in the Good Spirit of God: Not that they thought that every one before Baptism was *possessed* by the Devil, but only that *we are by Nature Children of Wrath*, Enemies to God, and Slaves to Satan. Nor did they lay any Stress upon the bare Usage of those Symbolick Rites, but wholly upon the Church's Prayers, which at the same time were made, that God would deliver those Persons from the Power of Satan, and by his Spirit unite them to the Church. This being done, they were brought to the *Font*, and were first stript of their *Garments*, (intimating thereby *their putting off the Old Man, which is corrupt, with his deceitful Lusts*:) And that all Occasions of Scandal and Immodesty might be prevented in so Sacred an Action, the * Men and Women (as I observed before) were baptized in their distinct *Apartments*; the Women havig *Deaconesses* to attend them, to undress and dress them, to stand about and overshadow them, that nothing of Indecency might appear. Then followed the *Unction*, a Ceremony of early Date, by which (says

Chap. 10

De Bapt. c. 18. p. 231.

De Nupt. & Concup. l. 2. c. 29. tom. 7. col. 856.

* *Const. Apost. l. 3. c. 15. p. 899. Epiph. Haref. 79. p. 447. ib. l. 7. c. 23. p. 379. Catec. 2. p. 518. Ambros. de Sac. l. 1. c. 2. tom. 4. p. 429. Vid. Dion. Areop. de Eccl. Hierarch. c. 2. p. 279.*

Part I. S. *Cyril*) they ſignified that they were now cut off from the *wild Olive*, and were *ingrafted* into Chriſt the *true Olive-tree*, and made Partakers of his Fruits and Benefits; or elſe to ſhew that now they were become *Champions* for Chriſt, and had entred upon a State of Conflict, wherein they muſt ſtrive and contend with all the Snares and Allurements of the World; as the *Athletæ* of old were anointed againſt their ſolemn Games, that they might be more expedite, and that their *Antagoniſts* might take leſs hold upon them: Or rather probably to denote their being admitted to the great Privileges of Chriſtianity, *a choſen Generation, a Royal Prieſthood, an holy Nation* (as the *Apoſtle* ſtyles Chriſtians;) Offices, of which *Anointing* was an ancient Symbol, both of being deſigned to them, and inveſted in them. † And this Account *Tertullian* favours, where ſpeaking of this Unction in Baptiſm, he tells us, 'tis derived from the Ancient, *i.e. Jewiſh* Diſcipline, where the Prieſts were wont to be *anointed* for the Prieſthood. For ſome ſuch Purpoſe, they thought it fit that a Chriſtian (who carries *Unction* in his very *Name*) ſhould be anointed as a *ſpiritual* King and Prieſt, and that no time was more proper for it than at his Baptiſm, when the Name of *Chriſtian* was conferred upon him. * Together with this, we may ſuppoſe it was, that the *Sign* of the *Croſs* was made upon the Forehead of the Party baptized. When this Ceremony firſt began to be uſed in Baptiſm, I find not: S. *Baſil* reckons it (and he puts it too in the firſt place) amongſt thoſe ancient *Cuſtoms* of the Church that had been derived from the Times of the *Apoſtles*. That it was generally in Uſe in the Times of *Tertullian* and *Cyprian*, we have ſufficient Evidence from the Writings, and indeed cannot reaſonably ſuppoſe they ſhould omit it in this ſolemn Action (where it is ſo proper) when they uſed it

† *De Bap. c. 7. p. 266.*

* *De Spir. S. c. 27. tom. 2. p. 351. Vid. Tert. adv. Marcion l. 3. p. 226. Cyp. de lap. p. 169. Frons cum ſigno &c. De unit. Ecc. p. 185. Ea parte Corporis, &c. adv. Demet. p. 203. Renati, & ſigno Chriſti ſignati, &c. De cor. mil. c. 3. p. 102. Vide Cyril ad Illum. Catech. 4. p. 81.*

it in the commoneſt Actions of their Lives; *Tertullian* expreſly aſſuring us, *That upon every Motion, at their going out or coming in, at their going to Bath, or to Bed, or to Meals, or whatever their Employment or Occaſions called them to, they were wont* frontem ſignaculo terere, *to make the Sign of the Croſs upon their Forehead*; and this they did (as he there tells us) not that it was impoſed upon them by any Law of *Chriſt*, but brought in by a pious Cuſtom, as that which did very much tend to ſtrengthen and increaſe their Faith. By this they ſhewed, *That they were not aſhamed of the Croſs of Chriſt*, nor unwilling to engage in the Service of a *Crucified* Maſter, which yet was ſo great a Scandal to the Heathen World, and therefore they ſo often triumphed in this Symbol and Repreſentation of it. Thus S. *Hierom*, though he lived in a Time when Chriſtianity had almoſt quite prevailed over all other Religions in the World, yet counted this the great Matter of his Glory, *That I am* (ſays he) *a Chriſtian, that I was born of Chriſtian Parents, and do carry in my Forehead the Banner of the Croſs.* And indeed ſo great a Reſpect did they bear to this Repreſentation of our *Saviour*'s Death, that (though they did not *worſhip* the Croſs, yet) they took Care that it ſhould not be put to any mean and trivial Uſes, be painted or made upon the *Ground*, or engraven upon Marble Pavements, or any thing where it might be trampled upon; as is expreſly provided by a Law of *Theodoſius* and *Valentinian*.

Chap. 10

Præf. in Joh. tom. 3. p. 24.

Lib. 1. C. Juſtin. tit. 8. L. unic.

The Action having proceeded thus far, the Party to be baptized was wholly *immerged* or put under Water, which was the almoſt conſtant and univerſal Cuſtom of thoſe Times, whereby they did more notably and ſignificantly expreſs the *three great Ends and Effects* of Baptiſm; for as in Immerſion there are in a manner three ſeveral Acts, the *putting the* Perſon into Water, his *abiding* there for a little

Part I. time, and his *riſing* up again; ſo by theſe were repreſented Chriſt's *Death*, *Burial*, and *Reſurrection*, and in Conformity thereunto, our *Dying* unto *Sin*, the *Deſtruction* of its Power, and our *Reſurrection* to a new Courſe of Life: By the Perſon's being put into Water, was lively repreſented the putting off the Body of the Sins of the Fleſh, and being waſhed from the Filth and Pollution of them: By his Abode under it, which was a kind of Burial in the Water, his Entring into a State of Death or Mortification, like as *Chriſt* remained for ſome time under the State or Power of Death; therefore *as many as are baptized into Chriſt*, are ſaid *to be baptized into his Death, and to be buried with him by Baptiſm into Death, that the Old Man being crucified with him, the Body of Sin might be deſtroyed, that henceforth he might not ſerve Sin, for that he that is dead is freed from Sin*, as the Apoſtle clearly explains the Meaning of this Rite: And then by his *Emerſion*, or Riſing up out of the Water, was ſignified his Entring upon a new Courſe of Life, differing from that which he lived before, *that like as Chriſt was raiſed up from the Dead by the Glory of the Father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in Newneſs of Life*. But though, by reaſon of the more eminent Significancy of theſe things, *Immerſion* was the common Practice in thoſe Days, and therefore they earneſtly urged it, and pleaded for it; yet did they not hold *Sprinkling* to be unlawful, eſpecially in Caſes of Neceſſity, as of Weakneſs, Danger of Death, or where Conveniency of immerging could not be had: In theſe and ſuch like Caſes *Cyprian* does not only allow, but plead for it, and that in a Diſcourſe on purpoſe, when the Queſtion concerning it was put to him. Upon this Account it is, that Immerſion is now generally diſuſed in theſe Parts of the World, and Sprinkling ſucceeded in its room, becauſe the tender Bodies of moſt Infants (the only Perſons now baptized) could not be

Ep. 76. ad Magn. p. 153.

put

put under Water in these cold *Northern* Climates, without apparent Prejudice to their Health, if not their Lives; and therefore in this as in other Cases, *God requires Mercy rather than Sacrifice*, especially considering that the main Ends of Baptism are attained this way, and the mystical Effects of it as *truly*, though not so *plainly* and significantly represented by Sprinkling, as by putting the Body under Water.

This Immersion was performed *thrice*, the Person baptized being three several times put under Water, a Custom which *Bazil* and *Sozomen* will have derived from the Apostles; 'tis certain that it was very early in the Church, being twice mentioned by *Tertullian* as the common Practice. By this trine Immersion they signified (say some) their distinct adoring the three Persons in the *Blessed Trinity*; and therefore the Custom was, in repeating the Words of Institution, at the naming of every *Person*, the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*, to plunge the Party under Water, as *Tertullian* tells us, and S. *Ambrose* more expressly. 'Twas done (say others) to represent the *Death*, *Burial*, and *Resurrection* of our Saviour, together with his *three Days* Continuance in the *Grave*. S. *Augustin* joins both these together, as the double Mystery of this ancient Rite, as he is cited by *Gratian* to this purpose: It cannot be denied but that the Ceremony is very significant and expressive, and accordingly the Ancients laid great Weight upon it; insomuch that the *Canons* that go under the Name of *Apostolical*, command him, whether Bishop or Presbyter, that baptizes any without the *trine Immersion*, to be *deposed* from his Ministry. But though this Custom was in a manner universal, yet in some Places (in After-times especially) it was otherwise; particularly in *Spain*, where they used it but *once*, lest they should gratify the *Arians*, who made use of the trine Im-

Ubi supra. *Hist. Eccl. lib. 6. c. 26. p. 673.* *Adv. Prax. c. 26. p. 443.* *de Cor. mil. c. 3. p. 460.* *Dion. Areop. Eccles. Hierarch. c. 2. p. 254.* *Ibid. de Sacram. lib. 2. c. 7. p. 424.* *Athanas. in dict. & interp. sap. Quæst. 93.* *Cyril. Catech. Myst. 2. p. 518.* *Greg. Nyss. Orat. Catech. c. 35. tom. 2. p. 530.* *De consecrat. Distinct. 4. c. 78. Can. 50.*

Part I. mersion to denote the Persons in the Trinity to be three distinct *Substances*, and gloried that the *Catholicks* did, and held the same with them. Upon this Account they were content to immerge but once; *Can.* 5. and when Differences and Controversies did still remain about it, the fourth Council of *Toledo*, out of a Letter of *Gregory* the *Great*, thus determined the Case; That they should still use their single Immersion, and that this would sufficiently express the Mysteries of Baptism; the Diving under Water would denote Christ's *Death* and *descending* into Hell, the coming out, *his Resurrection*; the single Immersion would express the *Unity* of the Godhead; while the *Trinity* of Persons would be sufficiently denoted by the Person's being baptized *in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.* The Person baptized being come out of the Water, was *anointed* the second Time, as S. *Cyril* tells us; and indeed, whatever becomes of the Unction that was before, 'tis certain that that which *Tertullian* speaks of as a Part of the ancient Discipline, was after the Person was baptized; which being done, he had a *white Garment* put upon him, to denote his having put off the *Lusts* of the Flesh, his being *washed* from the Filth and Defilement of his former Sins, and his Resolution to maintain a Life of unspotted Innocence and Purity, according to that solemn and strict Engagement which in Baptism he had taken upon him. In this they alluded to that of the Apostle, *that as many as are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ, i. e.* have engaged in that strict and holy Course of Life, which he, both by his Doctrine and Example, has left to the World. Accordingly Persons baptized are both by the Apostle and by the *Greek* Fathers frequently called φωτιζόμενοι, or the *enlightned*, because they now professed that they were *become the Children of the Light and of the Day*, and would not return to *Works of Darkness* any more;

De Baptism. c. 7. p. 226.
Cyril. Catech. 4. p. 533.
Jobius apud Phot. cod. 222. c. 18. col. 597.
Ambros. de iis qui mysteriis initiant. c. 7. tom. 4. p. 425.

more; and this, as they expected Mercy from *Christ* at the great Day; therefore the white Garment was wont to be delivered to them with such a Charge as this, *Receive the white and immaculate Garment, and bring it forth without Spot before the Tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ, that thou may'st have Eternal Life. Amen.* From the wearing of these white Vestments (as we have observed before) *Pentecost* (which was one of the two annual Times for Baptism) came to be called *Whitesunday*; as also the Sunday after *Easter*, (which was the other time) *Dominica in albis*, because then they laid this *white* Robe aside: For it was the Custom for Persons baptized to wear this Garment for a whole Week after they were baptized, and then to put it off and lay it up in the Church, that it might be kept as an Evidence against them, if they violated or denied that *Faith* which they had owned in Baptism; whereof we have a memorable Instance under the *Arian* Persecution in *Africk*. *Elpidophorus*, a Citizen of *Carthage*, had lived a long time in the Communion of the Church, but apostatizing afterwards to the *Arians*, became a most bitter and implacable Persecutor of the *Orthodox* Party: Amongst others whom he summoned to be put to the Rack, was one *Miritas*, a venerable old *Deacon* (who had been the *Undertaker* for him at his Baptism) who being ready to be put upon the Rack, plucked out the white Vestment wherewith *Elpidophorus* had been cloathed at his Baptism, and with Tears in his Eyes thus openly bespake him before all the People: *These*, Elpidophorus, *thou Minister of Error, these are the Garments that shall accuse thee, when thou shalt appear before the Majesty of the great Judge; these I will diligently keep as a Testimony of that Ruin that shall depress thee down into the Lake that burns with Fire and Brimstone; these are they that were girt upon thee, when thou cameſt pure out of the Holy Font; and these are they that shall bitterly pursue*

Greg. Sacrament. inter Liturgic. Latinor. tom. 2. p. 269. vid. Euchelog. Græc. in Offic. S. Baptism. p. 357.

Victor Utic. de persecut. Vand. lib. 3. fol. 43.

Part I. *ſue thee when thou ſhalt be caſt into the Place of Flames; becauſe thou haſt cloathed thyſelf with Curſing as with a Garment, and haſt caſt off the ſacred Obligation of thy Baptiſm, and the true Faith which thou didſt then profeſs and take upon thee.* Theſe were the main and moſt conſiderable Circumſtances wherewith *Baptiſm* was adminiſtred in the Primitive Church; ſome whereof were by Degrees antiquated and diſuſed: Other Rites there were, that belonged only to particular Churches, and which, as they were ſuddenly taken up, ſo were as quickly laid aſide; others were added in After-times, till they increaſed ſo faſt, that the Uſage and the Number of them became abſurd and burdenſom, as may appear by the Office for Baptiſm in the *Romiſh Ritual* at this Day.

As a Concluſion to this Chapter, I had once thought to have treated concerning *Confirmation*, which ever was a conſtant *Appendage* to Baptiſm, and had noted ſome things to that Purpoſe; but ſhall ſuperſede that Labour, finding it ſo often, and ſo fully done by others in juſt Diſcourſes, that nothing conſiderable can be added to them; only I ſhall give this brief and general Account of it: All Perſons baptized in the ancient Church (according to their Age and Capacity, Perſons *adult*, ſome little time after Baptiſm; *Children*, when arrived to Years of competent Ripeneſs and Maturity) were brought to the Biſhop, there further to confirm and ratify that *Compact* which they had made with God in Baptiſm, and by ſome ſolemn Acts of his Miniſtry, to be themſelves *confirmed* and ſtrengthened, by having the *Grace* and *Bleſſing* of God conferr'd upon them, to enable them to diſcharge that great Promiſe and Engagement which they had made to God. This was uſually performed with the *Ceremony* of *Unction*, the Perſon confirmed being anointed by the *Biſhop*, or in his abſence by an inferior *Miniſter*; and indeed Unction

Bp. Taylor, *Dr.* Hammond, *Mr.* Baxter, *Mr.* Hanmer, *Mr.* Daille.

tion was an ancient Rite used in the *Jewish* Church, to denote the conferring of Gifts or Graces upon Persons, and thence probably, amongst other Reasons (as many other Usages were) might be derived into the *Christian* Church; tho' a *learned* Man is of Opinion, that *Unction* was never used in *Confirmation*, but where the Person being in Case of Necessity baptized by some of the inferior Clergy, had not been before anointed; otherwise those who had received complete Baptism, were not afterwards anointed at their Confirmation, for which the Council of *Orange* is most express and clear. And indeed, that Confirmation was often administred without this *Unction*, no Man can doubt that knows the State of those times; being done only by solemn *Imposition* of the Bishop's Hands, and by devout and pious Prayers, that the Persons confirmed might *grow in Grace and the Knowledge of Christ*, and be enabled to perform those Vows and Purposes, and that Profession of Faith which they had before embraced in Baptism, and then again own'd before the whole Congregation. 'Till this was done, they were not accounted *complete Christians*, nor admitted to the holy *Communion*, nor could challenge any actual Right to those great Privileges of *Christianity*. Whence it is that the Ancients so often speak of Confirmation, as that which did *perfect* and consummate *Christians*, as being a Means to confer greater Measures of that Grace that was but begun in Baptism; upon all which Accounts, and almost exactly according to the *Primitive* Usage, it is still retained and practised in our own *Church* at this day. And happy were it for us, were it kept up in its due Power and Vigour; sure I am, 'tis too plain that many of our unhappy Breaches and Controversies in Religion, do (if not wholly, in a great Measure) owe their Birth and Rise to the Neglect and Contempt of this excellent Usage of the Church.

Chap. 10

Hen. Vales. Annot. ad Euseb. Hist. Eccles. p. 135. col. 1.

Can. 1.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Of the Lord's Supper, and the Administration of it in the ancient Church.

The Persons dispensing this Ordinance, who. The Persons communicating, the Baptized or the Faithful. Suspension from this Ordinance according to the Nature of the Offence. The Eucharist sent home to them that could not be present. The Case of Serapion. *A Custom in some Places to give the Sacrament to Persons when dead, if they died before they could receive it, and why. The Eucharist kept by Persons at home. Sent abroad. This laid aside, and in its stead* Eulogiæ, *or pieces of consecrated Bread sent from one Church to another, as Tokens of Communion. The Time of its Administration; sometimes in the Morning, sometimes at Night; vary'd according to the Peace they enjoy'd. How oft they received the Eucharist. At first every Day. This continued, in* Cyprian's *time, four times a Week. Afterwards less frequented. The usual Places of receiving, the Church; ordinarily, not lawful to consecrate it elsewhere. Oblations made by Persons before their Communicating. Their* Agapæ, *or Love-feasts, what. Whether before, or after the Sacrament. How long continued in the Church. The Manner of celebrating this Sacrament, collected out of the most ancient Authors. The Holy Kiss. The general Prayer for the Church and the whole World. The Consecration of the Sacrament:*

ment: The Form of it out of S. Ambroſe. *The Bread, common Bread. The Sacramental Wine mix'd with Water. This no neceſſary Part of the Inſtitution. Why probably uſed in thoſe Countries. The Poſture of Receiving not always the ſame. Singing Pſalms during the Time of the Celebration. Followed with Prayer and Thankſgiving. The whole Action concluded with the Kiſs of Peace.* Chap. 11

THE Holy *Euchariſt*, or SUPPER of our LORD, being a Rite ſo ſolemnly inſtituted, and of ſuch great Importance in the *Chriſtian* Religion, had place accordingly amongſt the Ancients in their *Publick* Offices and Devotions. In ſpeaking to which, I ſhall much-what obſerve the ſame Method I did in treating concerning *Baptiſm*, conſidering the *Perſons*, the *Time*, the *Place*, and the *Manner* of its Celebration. The *Perſons* adminiſtring were the ordinary *Paſtors* and Governors of the Church, thoſe who were ſet apart for the Miniſtration of Holy Offices; the Inſtitution was begun by our *Lord* himſelf, and the Adminiſtration of it by him committed to his *Apoſtles*, and to their ordinary Succeſſors to the End of the World. We find in *Tertullian*, that they never received it from any but the Hand of the *Preſident*, which muſt either be meant of the particular Cuſtom of that Church where he lived, or of *Conſecration* only; for otherwiſe the Cuſtom was, when the *Biſhop* or *Preſident* had by ſolemn Prayers and Bleſſings conſecrated the Sacramental Elements, for the *Deacons* to diſtribute them to the People, as well to thoſe that were abſent, as to them that were preſent, as *Juſtin Martyr* expreſly affirms, and as the Cuſtom generally

De cor. mil. c. 3. p. 102.

was

Part I. was afterwards. For the *Persons communicating* at this Sacrament, at first the *whole* Church, or Body of *Christians*, within such a Space, that had embraced the Doctrine of the Gospel, and baptized into the Faith of *Christ*, used constantly to meet together at the *Lord*'s Table. As Christians multiply'd, and a more exact Discipline became necessary, none were admitted to this Ordinance 'till they had arrived at the Degree of the *Faithful*; for whoever were in the State of *Catechumens*, *i. e.* under Instruction in order to their Baptism, or by reason of any heinous Crime, under the Censures and Suspension of the Church, and not yet passed thro' the several Stages of the *Penitents*; might not communicate, and were therefore commanded to *depart* the Church, when the rest went to the Celebration of the Sacrament: For looking upon the *Lord's Supper* as the highest and most solemn Act of Religion, they thought they could never take Care enough in the dispensing of it. Accordingly, whoever were found guilty of any scandalous Fault, was, according to the Nature of the Offence, debarr'd the Communion, a shorter or a longer Time, and sometimes all their Life, not to be reconciled and taken into the Communion of the Church, till they had continued their Repentance to their Death-bed. As for those Persons that could not be present, either thro' Distance of Place, Sickness, or any other just Cause, the *Eucharist* was wont to be sent *home* to them, some little Pieces of the *consecrated* Bread *dipt* in the Sacramental *Cup*, which were usually carry'd by the *Deacon* or some inferior Officer of the Church, or in Cases of Necessity, by any other Person: As in the Case of *Serapion*, of whom *Dionysius* of *Alexandria* relates, That having been all his Life a good Man, at last *lapsed* in a Time of Persecution, and tho' he oft desired Reconciliation, yet none would com-

Apol. 2. *p.* 97.

Apud Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 6. c. 44. p. 246.

communicate with him. Not long after, he was seized upon by a mortal Sickness, deprived of the Use of his Speech and Senses; but coming to himself after four Days, he sends his Nephew, a little Boy, late at Night, for one of the *Presbyters* to come to him; the Minister was at that time sick, but considering the Exigence of the Case, gives the Boy a little Piece of the *Eucharist*, bids him to *moisten* it with a little Water, and so give it him in his Mouth, which he did; and immediately the old Man chearfully departed this Life. For the better understanding of which, we are to observe, that those who had lapsed into Idolatry were to undergo a very long time of Penance, and were not many times admitted to the Communion, till they were near their Death; and because it sometimes happen'd that they were overtaken with sudden Death, before the Sacrament could be administred to them, thence a Custom sprung up, to give it them *after* they were *dead*; which they did doubtless upon this Ground, that they might give some kind of Evidence, that those Persons died in the *Peace* and *Communion* of the Church; though this Usage was afterwards by many *Councils* abrogated and laid aside. I take no Notice in this Place of their giving the Eucharist to *new baptized Infants*, the Case being so commonly known and obvious. In those early times, nothing was more common than for Christians either to carry, or to have sent to them some Parts of the *Eucharist*, which they kept in some decent Place in their Houses against all emergent Occasions; especially to *fortify* and strengthen their Faith in times of Persecution, and to increase Kindness and Amity with one another; whence one that was well versed in *Church-Antiquities*, conjectures, that whenever they entertained Friends or Strangers, they used before every Meal, first to give them some Parts of the holy *Eucharist*,

Chap. 11

Vid. Conc. 3. Carth. Can. 6. Conc. 6. in Trull. Can. 83.

Joa. Front. Epist. de φιλοξενίαις Veter. p. 6.

Part I. *Eucharist*, as being the greatest *Badge*, the strongest *Band* of true Love and Friendship in the World. Besides these Parcels of the Sacramental Elements, there were wont at the Celebration of the Communion, to be Pieces of Bread (which remained of the Offerings of the People) which being solemnly *blessed* by the Bishop, might be given to those who had no Right to be at the *Lord*'s Table, as to the *Catechumens*, and such like, and were to them instead of the Sacrament. These Pieces were properly called *Eulogiæ*, because set apart by solemn *Benediction*, and were sent up and down the Towns and Villages round about, to testify and represent their mutual Union and Fellowship with one another; nay, and sometimes from Churches in one Country to those that were in another; which was also done by the *Eucharist* itself: For so *Irenæus* in a Letter to Pope *Victor*, tells us, that the Ministers of Churches (tho' differing in some little Circumstances) did yet use to send the *Eucharist* to one another; which Custom is also taken Notice of by *Zonaras*. But because the carrying the *Sacramental Elements* up and down the World, was thought not so well to consist with the Reverence and Veneration that is due to this solemn Ordinance; therefore it was abolish'd by the *Laodicean* Synod, and these *Eulogiæ* or Pieces of Bread appointed at *Easter* to be sent up and down in their room.

Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 5. c. 23. p. 193.

Can. 14.

For the *Time*, the next Circumstance, when they met together for this solemn Action, it was in general at their Publick Assemblies, on the *Lord's-day* always, or the first day of the Week, as we find it in the History of the *Apostles Acts*; besides other Days, and especially *Saturday*; on which Day all the Churches in the World (those of *Rome* only and *Alexandria* excepted) used to celebrate this Sacrament, as the *Historian* informs us. What time of the Day they took to do it, is not altogether

gether so certain. Our blessed *Saviour* and his Apostles celebrated at Night, at the time of the *Jewish* Passover; but whether the *Apostles* and their immediate Successors punctually observed this Circumstance, may be doubted; 'tis probable that the Holy *Eucharist*, which S. *Paul* speaks of in the Church of *Corinth*, was solemnized in the *Morning*; the Apostles calling it a *Supper*, (as *Chrysostom* thinks) not because it was done in the *Evening*, but the more effectually to put them in Mind of the Time when our *Lord* did institute those Holy Mysteries. *Tertullian* assures us, in his Time 'twas done *in tempore victûs*, about *Supper-time*, (as all understand him) and very often in the Morning *before Day*, when they held their Religious Assemblies; of which *Pliny* also takes Notice in his Letter to the *Emperor*. For in those Times of Persecution, when they were hunted out by the inquisitive Malice of their Enemies, they were glad of the remotest Corners, the most unseasonable Hours, when they could meet to perform the joint Offices of Religion. But this communicating at Evening or at Night, either lasted only during the extreme Heats of Persecution, or at least wore off apace; for *Cyprian* expressly pleads against it, affirming, that it ought to be in the *Morning*; and so indeed in a short time it prevailed over most Parts of the World, except in some Places of *Egypt* near *Alexandria*; of which *Socrates* tells us, that after they had sufficiently feasted themselves in the Evening, they were wont to receive the Sacrament. Under this Circumstance of Time we may take Occasion to consider, how oft in those Days, they usually met at this Table. And at first (while the *Spirit* of *Christianity* was yet warm and vigorous, and the Hearts of Men passionately inflamed with the Love of *Christ*) 'tis more than probable they communicated *every Day*; or as oft as they came together

Chap. 11

Socr. l. 4. c. 22. p. 286.

In loc.

De cor. mil. c. 3. p. 102.

Lib. 10. Ep. 97.

Ad Cæcil. Ep. 63. p. 104.

Ut supra, p. 287.

Chap. 10

ther for Publick Worship, insomuch that the *Canons Apostolical* and the Synod of *Antioch* threaten every one of the Faithful with Excommunication, who came to Church to hear the Holy Scriptures, but staid not to *participate* of the *Lord's Supper*. The Eye of their Minds was then almost wholly fixed upon the Memory of their *crucified Saviour*; and the oftner they fed at his Table, the stronger and healthier they found themselves, and the more able to encounter with those fierce Oppositions that were made against them. This Custom of receiving the Sacrament *every Day* continued some considerable time in the Church, tho' in some Places longer than in others, especially in the *Western* Churches. From *Cyprian* we are fully assured 'twas so in his time: *We receive the Eucharist every Day* (says he) *as the Food that nourishes us to Salvation.* The like S. *Ambrose* seems to intimate, of *Milan*, whereof he was Bishop; nay, and after him S. *Hierom* tells us, 'twas the Custom of the Church of *Rome*; and S. *Augustin* seems pretty clearly to intimate, that it was not unusual in his time. In the Churches of the *East* this Custom wore off sooner, tho' more or less, according as the Primitive Zeal did abate and decay; S. *Basil* telling us, that in his time they communicated *four times a Week*, on the *Lord's-day*, *Wednesday*, *Friday* and *Saturday*; yea, and upon other days too, if the *Memory* or Festival of any Martyr fell upon them. Afterwards, as the Power of Religion began more sensibly to decline, and the Commonness of the thing begat some Contempt, (*Manna* itself was *slighted* after once it was rained down every day) this Sacrament was more rarely frequented; and from once a Day it came to once or twice a *Week*, and then fell to once a *Month*, and after for the most part to *thrice a Year*, at the *three* great Solemnities of *Christmas*, *Easter*, and *Whitsuntide*. To so great

Can. 9. Concil. Antioch. Can. 2.

Vid. Ep. Cyp. ad Thaboit. ep. 56. circa init. p. 89.

De Orat. Dom. p. 192.

De Sacr. l. 5. c. 4. p. 449. tom. 4.

Ad Jovinian. p. 108. tom. 2.

De Serm. Dom. in mont. l. 2. tom. 4. col. 1147. & Ep. 118. ad Jan. c. 3. col. 557.

Basil. Ep. 289. ad Cæsariam. Patrit. tom. 3. p. 279.

great a Coldneſs and Indifferency did the Piety and Devotion of *Chriſtians* grow, after once the true Primitive Temper and Spirit of the Goſpel had left the World! Chap. 11

Concerning the third Circumſtance, the *Place* where this Holy Supper was kept, much need not be ſaid, it being a main Part of their publick Worſhip, always performed in the Place of their Religious Aſſemblies. 'Twas inſtituted by our *Saviour* in a private *Houſe*, becauſe of its *Analogy* to the *Jewiſh Paſſover*, and becauſe the Neceſſity of that Time would not otherwiſe admit. By the Apoſtles, and Chriſtians with them, 'twas celebrated in the Houſes of Believers, generally in an *upper Room*, ſet apart by the Bounty of ſome Chriſtian, for the Uſes of the Church; and which (as I have formerly proved) was the conſtant *ſeparate* Place of Religious Worſhip for all the Chriſtians that dwelt thereabouts. Under the Severities of great Perſecutions they were forced to fly to the *Mountains*, or to their *Cryptæ*, or Vaults under Ground, and to celebrate the Sacrament at the *Tombs* of Martyrs, and over the *Aſhes* of the Dead. Churches growing up into ſome Beauty and Regularity, ſeveral Parts of the Divine Office began to have ſeveral Places aſſigned to them; the Communion Service being removed to the upper or *Eaſt* End of the Church, and there performed upon a Table of Wood, which afterwards was changed into one of Stone; and both of them not uncommonly, though *metaphorically*, by the Fathers ſtyled *Altars*: And the *Euchariſt* itſelf, in later Times eſpecially, the *Sacrament of the Altar*. This Place was called θυσιαστήριον, and was fenced in with *Rails*, within which the *Clergy* received the Sacrament, as the *Laity* did without. Here it was that they all uſed to meet at this Heavenly Banquet; for out of this Place they allowed not the Celebration of the Sacrament, (a thing expreſly

Part I. *Can.* 58. pressly forbidden by the *Laodicean* Council) unless in Cases of great Necessity; and therefore 'twas one of the principal Articles for which the Synod of *Gangra* deposed *Eustathius* from his Bishoprick, that he kept *private Meetings*, persuading some that were averse to the *publick Assemblies* of the Church, that they might communicate and receive the Sacrament at *Home*.

Socr. l. 2. c. 43. p. 156. & Conc. Gangr. Can. 5, 6.

We come last of all to consider the *Manner* how the *Eucharist* was celebrated in the ancient Church; but before we describe that, we are to take Notice, that after the Service of the *Catechumens*, and before the Beginning of that of the *Faithful*, at which the *Eucharist* was administred, the Custom was to present their *Offerings*; every one, according to his Ability, bringing some Gift as the *first Fruits* of his Increase, which was by the Minister laid upon the *Altar* or Communion-Table, none of them then thinking it fit *to appear before the Lord empty*. And therefore S. *Cyprian* severely chides a rich Widow of his time, who came without giving any thing to the *Poor Man's Box*, and did partake of their *Offerings* without bringing any *Offering* of her own. These *Oblations* were designed to the Uses of the Church, for the Maintenance of the Ministry, and the Relief of the Poor; especially out of them were taken the *Bread* and *Wine* for the Sacramental Elements, the Bread being no other than *common* Bread, such as served for their ordinary Uses; there being then no Notice taken of what has for so many hundred Years, and still is to this Day fiercely disputed between the *Greek* and the *Latin* Church, whether it ought to be Leavened or Unleavened Bread. Out of these Oblations also 'tis probable they took (at least sent Provisions extraordinary) to furnish the *common Feast*, which in those Days they constantly had at the Celebration of the Sacrament, where the

Irenæus adv. Hær. l. 4. c. 34. p. 362. Just. Martyr. Ap. 2. p. 98. De Oper. & Eleemos. p. 218.

the Rich and the Poor feasted together at the same Table. These were called *Apagæ* or *Love-Feasts*, (mentioned by S. *Jude*, and plainly enough intimated by S. *Paul*) because hereat they testified and confirmed their mutual *Love* and Kindness, a thing never more proper than at the Celebration of the *Lord's Supper*; which is not only a *Seal* of our *Peace* with God, but a *Sign* and a Pledge of our Communion and Fellowship with one another. Whether this Banquet was *before* or *after* the Celebration of the *Eucharist*, is not easy to determine; 'tis probable, that in the *Apostles* time, and the Age after them, it was *before* it, in Imitation of our *Saviour's* Institution, who celebrated the Sacrament after Supper: And S. *Paul* taxing the Abuses of the Church of *Corinth*, reproves them, *That when they came together for the Lord's Supper, they did not one tarry for another, but every one took his own Supper, i. e.* that Provision which he had brought from Home for the common Feast; which was devoured with great Irregularity and Excess; some eating and drinking all they brought, others (the Poor especially that came late) having nothing left, one being hungry, and another drunken. All this, 'tis plain, was done before the Celebration of the *Eucharist*, which was never administred till the whole Church met together. That therefore which the Apostle reproves and corrects, is their Indecency and Intemperance, commanding both Rich and Poor to *wait for one another*, and to eat this common Meal together, that they might the more orderly and unanimously pass to the Celebration of the *Lord's Supper*. In After-Ages this Feast was not till the Communion was over, when the Congregation feasted together, and so departed: And so *Chrysostom* expressly tells us 'twas in his Days. Besides, nothing is more obvious, than that it was customary in those Times for Persons to *fast* till they had received

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1 *Cor.* 11.

Hom. 27. *in* 1. *ad Cor. p.* 559.

Part I.

ceived the Communion. I know a very learned Man is of Opinion, that these *Love-Feasts* were not kept at the same time with the Celebration of the *Eucharist*; but besides that his Arguments are not conclusive, the whole Stream of learned Writers runs full against him. These Feasts continued for some Ages, till great Inconveniences being found in them, they were prohibited to be kept in Churches by the *Laodicean* Synod, and after that by the Council of *Carthage*; which though but Provincial or National Councils, yet the Decrees were afterwards ratified by the sixth *Trullan* Council, and the Custom in a short time dwindled into nothing.

Albas. de Rit. Eccl. obs. 18. *p.* 135.

Can. 28.

Can. 74.

These things being premised, the Sacramental Elements prepared, and all things ready, they proceeded to the Action itself, which (following for the main, the Account that is given us by S. *Cyril* of *Jerusalem*, and taking in what we find in others) was usually managed after this Manner: First, The *Deacon* brought Water to the *Bishop* and the *Presbyters* that stood round about the Table, to wash their Hands; signifying the *Purity* that ought to be in those that draw nigh to God, according to that of the *Psalmist*, *I will wash my Hands in Innocency, and so will I compass thine Altar, O Lord.* Then the *Deacon* cried out aloud, *Mutually embrace and kiss one another.* This *holy Kiss* was very ancient, commonly used in the Apostles times, and in the succeeding Ages of the Church; but especially at the Sacrament, as a Sign of the unfeigned *Reconciliation* of their Minds, and that all Injuries and Offences were blotted out, according to our *Lord*'s Command; *When thou bringest thy Gift to the Altar, and remembrest that thy Brother hath ought against thee, leave thy Gift before the Altar and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift.* This being done, they fell

Catech. myst. 5.

Cyril. ib. p. 534.

Const. Apos. l. 8. *c.* 11. *p.* 1013.

Just. Mart. Ap. 2. *p.* 97.

to

to Prayer, the whole Congregation praying together with the Minister, (which therefore *Justin Martyr* calls the *Common Prayer*, the Form whereof in the *Apostolical Constitutions* is described at large) for the *universal Peace* and Welfare of the Church, for the *Tranquillity* and Quietness of the World, for the *Prosperity* of the Age, for *wholsome Weather*, and *fruitful Seasons*, for all Sorts of *Persons*, for *Kings* and *Emperors*, *and all in Authority*, for *Soldiers* and *Armies*, for *Believers* and *Unbelievers*, for *Friends* and *Companions*, for the *Sick* and *Distressed*; and in short, for all that stood in Need of Help. This general Prayer is frequently mentioned by the ancient Fathers, as that which was at the Beginning of the Communion Service; tho' S. *Cyril* places it a little later, as doubtless it was in his time. After this, followed the mutual Salutation of the Minister and People, the *Minister* saying, *The Lord be with you*; to whom the *People* answered, *And with thy Spirit.* The Minister cryed, *Lift up your Hearts*, (nothing being more suitable, says S. *Cyril*, at this time, than that we should shake off all worldly Cares, and exalt our Hearts to God in Heaven) the People truly assenting and yielding to it, answered, *We lift them up unto the Lord.* The Minister proceeded, *Let us give Thanks unto the Lord*, (for what more fit than Thankfulness to God, and a high Resentment of such Favours and Blessings?) To this the People returned, *It is meet and just so to do.* Whereupon the Minister proceeded to the Prayer of Consecration, (the Form whereof we have in the *Apostolical* Constitutions) wherein he expressed huge Thankfulness to God for the Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of his Son, for the Shedding of his Blood for us, and the Celebration of it in this Sacrament; for condescending to admit them to such mighty Benefits, and praying for a closer Unity to one another in the same mystical

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Ibid. *L. 8. c. 10. p. 1011.* *Tert. Apol. c. 39.* *Aug. ep. 118.* *Const. Apos. l. 2. c. 57. p. 881.* *Ib. p. 538.* *Cyril. p. 537.* *Chrys. in c. 9. 1 ad Cor. Hom. 36. p. 652.* *2 ad Cor. c. 8. Hom. 18. p. 873.* *Cypr. de Or. dom. 195.* *L. 7. c. 26. p. 979.* *Just. Mart. ib. p. 98.*

Part I. Body; concluding usually with the *Lord's-Prayer*, and the hearty and universal Acclamation of *Amen* by all that were present. This done, the *Minister* cried out, ΤΑ ΑΓΙΑ ΤΟΙΣ ΑΓΙΟΙΣ, *Holy Things belong to holy Persons*; the *People* answering, *There is one Holy, one Lord Jesus Christ.* Then he exhorted them to a due Participation of the holy Mysteries, which *Cyril* tells us was done by way of a Divine *Hymn*, singing, *Come taste and see that the Lord is good.*

Cyril. p. 541. *Const. Apos.* l. 8. c. 13. p. 1022. *Ib.* p. 545.

After this, the *Bishop* or *Presbyter* took the Sacramental Elements, sanctified them by a solemn Benediction. The Form of *Consecration* we have in S. *Ambrose*: *Lord, make this Oblation now prepared for us, to become a reasonable and acceptable Sacrifice; this, which is the Figure of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; who the Day before he suffered, took the Bread in his sacred Hands, looked up to Heaven, giving Thanks to thee, O Holy Father, Almighty and Everlasting God, blessed it, and having broken it, gave it to his Apostles and Disciples, saying, Take eat all of it; for this is my Body which is broken for many. Likewise also, after Supper, he took the Cup that very Day before he suffered, looking up to Heaven, giving Thanks to thee, Holy Father, Almighty and Everlasting God; and having blessed it, gave it to his Apostles and Disciples, saying, Take and drink ye all of it, for this is my Blood.* After this, he first brake the *Bread*, and delivering to the Deacon, he distributed it to the Communicants; and after that the *Cup*, which was likewise delivered to them: For the Custom of communicating under *one kind* only, as is used in the Church of *Rome*, was then unknown unto the World, nay, and for above a thousand Years after *Christ*. In some Cases ('tis true) they dipt the Bread in the Wine, as in the Case of baptized *Infants*, to whom they administred the *Eucharist*, in those Primitive Times, and to very weak

De Socr. l. 4. c. 5. p. 439.

Just. Mart. ubi supr.

weak dying Persons who would not otherwise have swallowed the Bread; and that by this means they might keep the Sacrament at home against all emergent Occasions; and this probably might, in time, make the way easier for introducing the Sacrament under the kind of Bread only. Their Sacramental Wine was generally diluted and mixed with *Water*, as is evident from *Justin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, *Cyprian* and others. *Cyprian* in a long Epistle expresly pleads for it, as the only true and warrantable Tradition, derived from *Christ* and his *Apostles*; and endeavours to find out many *mystical* Significations intended by it, and seems to intimate as if he had been peculiarly *warned* of God to observe it according to that Manner: An *Argument* which that good Man often produces as his Warrant to knock down a Controversy, when other Arguments were too weak to do it. But altho' it should be granted, that our *Saviour* did so use it in the Institution of the Supper, (the Wines of those *Eastern* Countries being very *strong* and *generous*; and that our *Saviour*, as all sober and temperate Persons, might probably abate its Strength with Water, of which nevertheless the History of the Gospel is wholly silent) yet this being a thing in itself *indifferent* and accidental, and no way *necessary* to the Sacrament, could not be obligatory to the Church, but might either be done or let alone. The Posture wherein they received it, was not always the same: The *Apostles*, at the Institution of it by our *Saviour*, received it (according to the Custom of the *Jews* at Meals, at that time) *lying along* on their Sides upon Beds round about the Table. How long this way of receiving lasted, I find not: In the time of *Dionysius Alexandrinus* the Custom was, to stand at the *Lord's Table*, as he intimates in a Letter to Pope *Xystus*; other Gestures being taken in, as the Prudence and

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Ut supra Iren. l. 4. c. 57. l. 5. c. 2.

Ad Cæcil. Ep. 63. p. 100.

Ib. p. 105.

Apud Eus. Hist. Ecc. l. 7. c. 9. p. 255.

Part I. Piety of the Governors of the Church judged most decent and comely for such a solemn Action. The Bread and Wine were delivered into the Hands of those that communicated, and not, as the Superstition of After-Ages brought in, *injected* or thrown into their *Mouths*. *Cyril* tells us, that in his time they used to stretch out their *right* Hand, putting their *left* Hand under it; either to prevent any of the Sacramental Bread from falling down, or, as some would have it, hereby to shadow out a kind of Figure of a *Cross*.

Pag. 545. Vid. Conc. 6. in Trull. Can. 101.

During the time of Administration, which in populous Congregations was no little time, they sung *Hymns* and Psalms; (the Compiler of the *Apostolical Constitutions* particularly mentions the 33d Psalm) which being done, the whole Action was solemnly concluded with Prayer and Thanksgiving, (the Form whereof is likewise set down by the Author of the *Apostolical* Constitutions) that God had thought them worthy to participate of such sacred Mysteries; and the People being blessed by the Bishop or the Minister of the Assembly, and having again saluted each other with a *Kiss of Peace*, as a Testimony of their hearty Love and Kindness, (whence *Tertullian* calls this Kiss *signaculum orationis*, the *Seal of Prayer*) the Assembly broke up, and they returned to their own Houses. This, for the main, was the Order wherein the first *Christians* celebrated this Holy Sacrament; for tho' I do not pretend to set down every thing in that precise and punctual Order wherein they were always done, (and how should I, when they often varied according to *Time* and *Place*?) yet I doubt not but whoever examines the Usages of those Times, will find that 'tis done as near as the Nature of the Thing would bear.

Lib. 8. c. 13. p. 1023. Vid. Dion. Areop. de Ecc. Hierarch. c. 3. p. 284. l. 7. c. 27. p. 980. & l. 8. c. 15. Cyril. p. 546. De Orat. c. 14.

The End of the First Part.

Primitive Christianity:

OR, THE

RELIGION

OF THE

Ancient Christians

IN THE

First AGES of the GOSPEL.

PART II.

The Religion of the Primitive Christians, as to those Vertues that respect themselves.

CHAP. I.

Of their Humility.

The second Branch of Religion comprehended under the Notion of Sobriety, and discover'd in some great Instances of it. The proper Tendency of the Christian Religion to beget Humility. This Divine Temper eminently visible in the first Christians: Made good out of their

Part II.

their Writings. The great Humility and Self-Denial of Cyprian. *What* Nazianzen *reports to this purpose of his own Father; their modest declining that just Commendation that was due to them. Many who suffer'd, refused the honourable Title of Martyrs.* Nazianzen's *Vindication of them against the Suggestions of* Julian *the Apostate. The singular Meekness and Condescension of* Nebridius, *amidst all his Honours and Relations at Court. Their stooping to the vilest Offices, and for the meanest Persons: Dressing and Ministring to the Sick, washing the Saints Feet, kissing the Martyrs Chains. The remarkable Humility of* Placilla *the Empress, and the Lady* Paula. *An excellent Discourse of* Gregory Nyssen's *against Pride.*

NEXT to *Piety* towards God, succeeds that Part of Religion that immediately respects *ourselves*, expressed by the Apostle under the general Name of **Sobriety**, or the keeping ourselves within those Bounds and Measures which God has set us; Vertues, for which the Primitive Christians were no less renowned than for the other. Amongst them I take Notice of their *Humility*, their *Contempt* of the *World*, their *Temperance* and *Sobriety*, their *Courage* and *Constancy*, and their exemplary *Patience* under Sufferings. To begin with the first.

Humility is a Vertue that seems more proper to the Gospel; for tho' *Philosophers*, now and then, spake a few good Words concerning it, yet it found no real Entertainment in their Lives, being generally *animalia gloriæ*, Creatures puft up with Wind and Emptiness, and that *sacrificed* only to their own Praise and Honour: Whereas the Doctrines of the

Gospel

Gospel immediately tend to level all proud and swelling Apprehensions, to plant the World with Mildness and Modesty, and to *clothe Men with Humility, and the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit.* By these we are taught to dwell at home, and to converse more familiarly with ourselves, to be acquainted with our own Deficiencies and Imperfections, and rather to admire *others* than to advance *ourselves:* For the proper Notion of Humility lies in a low and mean *Estimation* of ourselves, and an answerable Carriage towards others; *not thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think,* nor being unwilling that other Men should value us at the same Rate. Now, that this was the excellent Spirit of *Primitive Christianity,* will appear, if we consider how earnestly they protested against all *ambitious* and vain-glorious Designs, how chearfully they condescended to the *meanest* Offices and Employments, how studiously they declined all Advantages of *Applause* and Credit, how ready they were rather to *give* Praise to others, than to take it to themselves, in *Honour preferring one another.* S. *Clemens* highly commends his *Corinthians,* that all of them were of an humble Temper, in nothing given to Vain-glory, *subject* unto others rather than *subjecting* others to themselves, ready to give rather than receive. Accordingly, he exhorts them (especially after they were fallen into a little Faction and Disorder) still to be humble-minded, to lay aside all Haughtiness and Pride, Foolishness and Anger; and not to glory in *Wisdom, Strength,* or *Riches,* but *let him that glories glory in the Lord;* and to follow the Example of our Lord, the *Scepter* of the Majesty of God; who came not in the vain Boasting of Arrogance and Pride, altho' able to do whatsoever he pleased; but in great Meekness and Humility of Mind, appearing in the World without any *Form or Come-*

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Epist. ad Corinth. p. 3.

Pag. 17.

Pag. 20.

Part II. *Comeliness, or any Beauty that he should be desired*; suffering himself *to be despised and rejected of Men, who esteemed him not, and hid, as it were, their Faces from him; who counted himself a Worm, and no Man, and was accordingly made a Reproach of Men, and the Derision of the People; all they that saw him, laughing him to Scorn, shooting out the Lip, and shaking the Head at him.* Now, if our Lord himself was so humble-minded, what should we be, who are come under the Yoke of his Grace? This, and much more to the same purpose, has that Venerable and *Apostolical* Man in that admirable Epistle; wherein he does lively describe and recommend the meek and excellent Spirit of the Gospel.

Epist. ad Zen. & Seren. p. 505. *Justin* the *Martyr* treads in the very same Steps: He tells us, that we are to shun all *sinister* Suspicions of others, and to be very careful what *Opinion* we entertain of them: That we are to be of a meek and unpassionate Mind, not *envying* the good Esteem and Respect which others have, nor ambitiously affecting, or putting ourselves forward upon any Service or Employment: That we are humbly to submit ourselves, not in *Words* only, but in all our *Actions*; so as that we may appear not to be *Impostors* and Dissemblers, but mild and undesigning Persons; for whoever would govern his Life aright, must be modest and *unpragmatical*; not angry and contentious, but silently consider with himself, what is best and fittest to be done: That we are to account others wise and prudent, and not to think ourselves the only discreet and understanding Persons: That we must not despise their Admonitions; but hearken to their Counsels whenever they are just and true. When some in S. *Cyprian*'s time had made a noble and resolute Confession of *Christ* in the Face of the greatest Danger, lest they should be *exalted above measure* in their own Thoughts, he bids them remember, accord-

Ibid. p. 508, 509.

Epist. 5. *Presb. & Diacon. p.* 13.

according to the Discipline of the Gospel, to be humble, and modest, and quiet, that they might preserve the Honour of their Name, and be as glorious in their *Actions*, as they had been in their *Words* and *Confessions* of Christ; that they should imitate their Lord, who was not more proud, but more humble at the time of his Passion, *washing his Apostles Feet*; and follow the Counsel and Pattern of S. *Paul*, who in his greatest Sufferings continued meek and humble, and did not arrogate any thing to himself, no not after he had been honour'd with a Translation into *Paradise* and the *third Heavens*. And great Reason he had to press this with all possible Vehemency at that time, lest Christians by their turbulent and unquiet Carriage should provoke the Heathen Magistrates to greater Severity against them: And indeed who could better do it than he, who was himself so eminent for Humility? For tho' some *Schismatical* Persons (whose Wildness and Insolence he sought to restrain) endeavour'd to insinuate that he was not so humble as became a Man of his Rank and Order, and as were our *Lord* and his Apostles; yet observe how he vindicates himself in a Letter to *Pupianus*, the Head of the Party: As for my Humility *(says he)* 'tis sufficiently known, not only to the Brethren, but the *Gentiles* themselves do see and respect it, and thou thyself didst know and honour it, whilst thou wast yet in the Church, and didst communicate with me: But which of us, I pray, is fartheſt from Humility; I, who daily serve the Brethren, and receive those who come unto the Church with all Joy and Kindness; or *Thou*, who makest thyself a *Bishop* over thy *Bishop*, and pretendest to be a Judge appointed by God over him who is thy Judge? And indeed how far the good Man was from any Designs of Greatness and Domination, appear'd in this, that

Chap. 1.

Epist. 69. *p.* 116.

Part II. that when the People had universally chosen him to be *Bishop*, he privately withdrew and retired himself, reckoning himself unworthy of so great and honourable an Office, and giving way to others, whose Age and Experience rendred them (as he thought) much fitter for it: But the Importunity of the People being heightned into a greater Impatiency, and having found where he was, they beset the House, and block'd up all Passages of Escape till they had found him, and forced it upon him. And with no less Humility did he behave himself in the Discharge of it: When consulted by some of his *Clergy* what they should do in the Case of the *Lapsed*, he answers, That being now alone he could say nothing to it, for that he had determined from his first entring upon his Bishoprick, not to judge any thing by his own *private* Order, without the Counsel of the *Clergy*, and the Consent of the *People*. So meanly did that wise and excellent Man think of himself, and so much did he attribute to the Judgment and Concurrence of those that were below him.

Pontius Diac. in vit. Cypr. p. 12.

Epist. 5. *p.* 13, 14.

Nazianzen reports of his Father (a *Bishop* too) that amongst other Vertues he was peculiarly remarkable for *Humility*; which he did not express *Philosopher-like* in little Arts of external *Modes*, and Carriage, putting on a feign'd Behaviour, like Women, who having no *natural* Beauty of their own, fly to the *Additionals* of Dresses and Paintings, δι' ἐυχρωμοσύνεν ἀχήμονες, becoming more deform'd by their ascititious Beauty. His Humility consisted not in his *Dress*, but in the *Constancy* of his Mind; not in the *hanging down* of his Head, or the *Softness* of his Tone, or the *Demureness* of his Look, or the *Gravity* of his Beard, or the Shaving of his Head [the *Cropping of his Hair*] or the Manner of his Gate; but in the Frame and Temper of his Soul, being as humble in his Mind, as he was *sublime* and excellent

Orat. 19. *in laud. Patr. p.* 300.

lent in his Life; and when no Man could arrive at the Perfection of his Vertues, yet every one was admitted to a Freedom of Converſe with him. Both in his Garb and Diet he equally avoided *Pomp* and *Sordidneſs*; and tho' a great Reſtrainer of his Appetite, would yet ſeem not to do it, leſt he ſhould be thought plainly to deſign Glory to himſelf, by being *needleſly* ſingular above other *Men*. How induſtriouſly do we find them many times diſowning that deſerved Praiſe and Commendation that was due to them? How modeſtly does *Juſtin Martyr* decline his Adverſary's Commendation of the Acuteneſs and Elegancy of his Reaſonings? reſolving all into the *Grace of God*, that enabled him to underſtand and expound the *Scriptures*, of which Grace he there perſuades all Men freely and fully to become Partakers with him. Of the *Confeſſors* in the time of the Perſecution under *M. Aurelius*, *Euſebius*, out of the Relation which the Churches of *Vienna* and *Lyons* in *France* ſent to the Churches in *Aſia*, tells us, that altho' they had often born witneſs to the Truth at the deareſt Rate of any thing on this ſide Death, tho' they had been frequently thrown to wild *Beaſts*, expoſed to the *Fire*, and the Remains of Wounds and Violence were viſible in all Parts of their Bodies; yet in Imitation of the great Humility of the Son of God, they would not after all this (which yet was not uncommon in thoſe times) either *call* themſelves *Martyrs*, or ſuffer others to call them ſo; but if any of the Brethren either by Letter or Diſcourſe had ſaluted them by that Title, they would ſeverely reprove and check them for it; acknowledging themſelves at beſt but vile and deſpicable *Confeſſors*, and with Tears begging of the Brethren to be inſtant with God by Prayer, that they might perfect all by a real Martyrdom. Hence it was, that when *Julian* the *Apoſtate* refuſed to proceed againſt the Chriſtians by

Chap. 1.

Dialog. cum Tryp. p. 280.

Hiſt. Eccl. lib. 5. *c.* 2. *p.* 166.

Part II. by open Perſecution, as his Predeceſſors had done, becauſe he envy'd them the *Honour* of being *Martyrs*; *Nazianzen* anſwers, that he was greatly miſtaken if he ſuppoſed they ſuffer'd all this, rather out of a Deſire of *Glory*, than a Love of *Truth*. Such a fooliſh and vain-glorious Humour might indeed be found amongſt his *Philoſophers*, and the beſt of his Party, many of whom have put themſelves upon ſtrange Attempts, meerly to gain the Honour of a Name, and the Reputation of *Divinity*: But for Chriſtians, they had rather *die* in the Cauſe of Religion, altho' no Man ſhould ever know of it, than to live and flouriſh amongſt others with the greateſt Honour and Eſteem; it being our great Solicitude not to pleaſe *Men*, but only to obtain Honour from God: Nay, ſome of us *(ſays he)* arrive to that *heroick* Pitch, as to deſire an intimate *Union* unto God meerly for himſelf, and not for the Honours and Rewards that are laid up for us in the other World. Memorable is the Humility of the great *Conſtantine*, that when all Mens Mouths were filled with the honourable Mention of his Vertues, and one took upon him to praiſe him to his Face, telling him how happy he was whom God had thought worthy of ſo great an *Empire* in this World, and for whom he reſerved a much better *Kingdom* in the next; he was highly offended with the Addreſs, and adviſed the Man that he ſhould not preſume to talk ſo any more; but rather turn his *Praiſes* of him into *Prayers* to God for him, that both here and hereafter he might be thought worthy to be numbred amongſt the Servants of God.

Orat. 3. (in Julian 1.) p. 73.

De Vit. Conſtant. lib. 4. c. 48. p. 551.

† *Ad Salvinam Nebridii viduam, de viduit. ſervand. p. 75. tom. 1.*

I cannot but take Notice of what † S. *Hierom* reports of *Nebridius*, a young *Roman Gentleman*, Couſin-German to the *Empreſs*, by whom he was brought up in the Palace, Play-fellow and Companion to the young Emperors (to whom he was very

ery dear) trained up with them in the ſame Studies and Arts of Education; that notwithſtanding all this, and that he was then in the Prime and Vigour of his Youth, yet he was neither *debauched* by Intemperance, amidſt the Delicacies and Pleaſures of the Court, nor *ſwell'd* with Pride, reflecting upon others with a ſurly Look; but rendered himſelf amiable unto all: The Princes he loved as Brethren, and *revered* as Lords; their Attendants and Miniſters, and all the Orders of the Palace he had ſo endeared by Kindneſs and Condeſcenſion, that they who were ſo much *below* him, did in a Manner think themſelves *equal* to him. Chap. 1.

I ſhall give but one Inſtance more of the Humility of thoſe times, and that is, their ready condeſcending to any *Office* or Employment, tho' never ſo mean, about the pooreſt Chriſtian: They thought it not below them to *cook* and *provide* Victuals for them, to *viſit* the Impriſoned, to *kiſs* their Chains, to *dreſs* their Wounds, to waſh their Feet. And in this our Lord himſelf went before them, when a little before his Death he roſe from Table, girt himſelf, *waſh'd and wiped his Diſciples Feet*, and then told them what Influence this ought to have upon them, *That if their Lord and Maſter had waſhed their Feet, they ought alſo to waſh one another's Feet, for that he had given them an Example, that they ſhould do as he had done to them*; and good Reaſon, *the Servant not being greater than his Lord, neither he that is ſent, greater than he that ſent him.* Accordingly we find this particular Act of Chriſtian Condeſcenſion frequently uſed in the Primitive Church. S. *Paul* expreſly requires it as a Qualification in a *Widow* that was to be taken in as a *Deaconeſs* into the Church, that ſhe be *one that has uſed to lodge Strangers, and to waſh the Saints Feet. Tertullian* aſſures us, 'twas uſually done by Chriſti- 1 *Tim.* 5. 10.

Part II. ans in his time, to go into the Prisons to *kiss* and embrace the Martyrs Chains, to *harbour* and provide for indigent Brethren, and to bring Water to wash the Saints Feet: No Office so low, which they were not content to stoop to.

Ad uxor. l. 2. c. 4. p. 168.

Theodoret. Hist. Eccl. l. 5. c. 18. p. 161.

When *Placilla* the Empress was check'd by some of the *Court* for her mighty Condescension in visiting the *Hospitals*, and curing the Lame and the Sick with her *own Hands*, preparing and giving them their Provisions, as a thing too much below her State and *Grandeur*; she answered, That to distribute Gold became the *Emperor*, but for her part she thought herself obliged to do this for *God*, who had advanced her to that Honour and Dignity: Often instilling this pious Counsel into her Husband, *It becomes you, Sir, always to remember what you once were, and what you now are; by which Means you will shew yourself not to be ungrateful to your great Benefactor, and will govern the Empire committed to you justly and lawfully, and to the Honour of him that gave it.*

Epitaph. Paulæ ad Eustoch. filiam. Tom. 1. p. 175.

S. *Hierom* reckoning up the Vertues of *Paula*, a Lady of the greatest Descent and Nobility in *Rome*, but devoting herself afterwards to the Solitudes of a Religious Life; tells us of her, That for Humility (the *prime* and chief Vertue of *Christians*) she carried herself with so much Lowliness, that whoever had seen and not known her, could not but have mistaken her for the meanest of the Maids that waited on her. Whenever she appeared in the midst of those devout and pious Virgins that dwelt with her, she always seemed both in *Cloaths* and *Voice*, and *Garb*, and *Gate*, the least and most contemptible of all the rest. So studious was the Piety of those Days to keep the Lustre of their own Perfections from sparkling in their Eyes, and not fondly to admire the *Glimmerings* of their own Light; being so far from falsly arrogating to themselves

ſelves thoſe Excellencies which they had not, that they induſtriouſly concealed thoſe excellent Perfections which they had! Chap. 1.

I cannot better conclude this Chapter, than with the excellent Reaſonings of S. *Gregory* of *Nyſſa* againſt *priding* a Man's ſelf in any external Ornaments or Advantages; where he thus entertains the proud Man: He that looks to *himſelf*, and not to the things that are about him, will ſee little Reaſon to be *proud*: For what is *Man?* Say the beſt of him, and that which may add the greateſt Honour and Veneration to him, that he's *born* of *Nobles*; and yet he that adorns his Deſcent, and ſpeaks highlieſt of the Splendor and Nobility of his Houſe, does but derive his Pedigree from the *Dirt*. And to enquire more narrowly into the Manner of his being born into the World common with other Men, were to uncover what Shame and Modeſty require ſhould be concealed in the profoundeſt Silence. And doſt thou not *bluſh*, thou *Statue* of *Earth*, who art ſhortly to be crumbled into *Duſt*, who *Bubble-like* containeſt within thee a ſhort-lived Humour? Doſt thou not *bluſh* to ſwell with Pride and Arrogance, and to have thy Mind ſtuffed with vain idle Thoughts? Haſt thou no regard to the double Term of Man's Life, *how* it *began*, and where it will *end?* thou prideſt thyſelf in thy *juvenile* Age, and flattereſt thyſelf in the Flower, the Beauty and Sprightlineſs of thy Youth, that thy *Hands* are ready for *Action*, and thy *Feet* apt to dance nimble *Meaſures*; that thy Locks are *waved* by the wanton Motions of the Wind, and a ſoft Down over-grows thy Cheeks; that thy purple Robes put the very *Roſes* to the Bluſh, and thy ſilken Veſtures are *variegated* with rich Embroidery of *Battles*, *Huntings*, or Pieces of ancient *Hiſtory*; or brought down to the Feet, artificially ſet off with black, and curiouſly made faſt

De beatitudinib. Orat. 1. *Tom.* 1. *p.* 768.

Part II. with *Strings* and *Buttons*. Theſe are the Things that thou look'ſt at, without any Regard to *thyſelf*. But let me a little, as in a *Glaſs*, ſhew thee thy own Face, *who* and *what* thou art: Haſt thou not ſeen in a publick *Charnel-houſe* the unveiled Myſteries of Human Nature; *Bones* rudely thrown upon Heaps; naked *Skulls* with hollow *Eye-holes*, yielding a dreadful and deformed Spectacle? Haſt thou not beheld their *grinning* Mouths, and *ghaſtly* Looks, and the reſt of their Members careleſly diſperſed and ſcattered? If thou haſt beheld ſuch Sights as theſe, in *them* thou haſt ſeen thyſelf. Where then will be the Signs of thy preſent Beauty, that good *Complexion* that adorns thy Cheeks and the Colour of thy Lips, that frightful *Majeſty* and ſupercilious Loftineſs that once reſided in thine Eyes, or thy Noſe that once beautifully graced thy Cheeks? Where are thy Locks that were wont to reach thy Shoulders, the Curls that uſed to adorn thy Temples? What are become of thoſe Arms that uſed to draw the *Bow*, thoſe Legs that uſed to beſtride thy *Horſes*? Where's the *Purple*, the *ſilken Garments*, the *long Robe*, the *Belt*, the *Spurs*, the *Horſe*, the *Race*, the *Noiſe* and *Prancings*; and all the reſt of thoſe things that now add Fuel to thy Pride? Tell me, where then will thoſe things be, upon the Account whereof thou doſt now ſo much *boaſt* and *bear* up thyſelf? Was there ever any *Dream* ſo fond and inconſtant, any thing more *fantaſtick* that ever appeared to a Man aſleep? What Shadow was ever ſo thin, ſo incapable of being graſped within the Hollow of the Hand, as this Dream of Youth, which at once *appears*, and immediately *vaniſhes* away. Thus the Holy Man treats the young vapouring Gallant, and levels his Pride with the ſober Conſiderations of Mortality. In his following Diſcourſe he deals with Perſons of riper Years, and ſuch as are in Places of

Authority

Authority and Power, and shews how absurd and uncomely Pride is in them; which it might not be impertinent to represent; but fearing to be tedious, I forbear. Chap. 1.

CHAP. II.

Of their Heavenly-Mindedness, and Contempt of the World.

The Soul rightly constituted naturally tends upwards, especially when assisted with the Aids of Religion. The first Christians much above the World. Not wrought upon by Temptations of Advantage. They accounted it the greatest Honour to be Christians. Contented with a very mean Portion of Outward things. The Story of some of our Saviour's Kindred brought before Domitian. *The Sect of the* Apostolici *and* Apotactici, *the Fathers of the Mendicant Orders in the Church of* Rome. *The little Care which Christians then had of rich Furniture and costly Provisions. Their denying to go to publick Feasts and Sports made for the Pleasure of the People. This charged upon them by the Heathens. The Case of the Woman that was seized upon by an Evil Spirit while she was at the Theatre. Their chearful parting with any worldly Comforts, Estates, Relations,* &c. *A strange Heroick Speech of* Melania *at the Loss of her Husband and two Sons, mentioned by S.* Hierom. *Eager for Martyrdom, as what would presently send them to Heaven. Their*

Part II. *frequent ſupporting themſelves under Sufferings with Diſcourſes of the Kingdom above. Thence accuſed as treaſonable Affecters of the Empire. Their Contempt of the World much promoted by the Opinion, that the Day of Judgment was near at hand. Chriſtians in the World like Sojourners in a ſtrange Country.*

THE Soul of Man being *Heaven-born*, cannot but partake of the Nature and Diſpoſition of that Country, and have a Native Inclination to that Place from whence it borrows its *Original:* And though, 'tis true, in this corrupt and *degenerate* State, it is deeply ſunk into *Matter*, clogg'd and over-born with the earthly and ſenſual Propenſions of the lower Appetites, the Deſires and Deſigns of Men creeping up and down like *Shadows* upon the Surface of the Earth; yet does it often, eſpecially when aſſiſted with the Aids of *Religion*, attempt its own Reſcue and Releaſe. The Mind of a good Man is acted by manly and *generous* Impulſes, it dwells in the Contemplations of the *upper* Region, tramples upon thoſe little Projects of Profit or Pleaſure which *enſnare* and *enſlave* other Men, and makes all its Deſigns ſubſervient to the Intereſts of a better Country: A Temper of Mind never more triumphant in any, than in the *Chriſtians* of old, whoſe *Converſations were in Heaven*, and whoſe Spirits breathed in too free an Air to be caught with the Charms of the beſt Enjoyments this World could afford: They looked upon the Delights and Advantages of this Life, as things not worthy to arreſt their Affections in their Journey to a better. *Juſtin Martyr* diſcourſing with *Trypho* the *Jew*, tells him, That they were careful with all Fear to converſe with Men according to the Scriptures, not greedily deſiring

desiring to gain *Riches*; or *Glory*, or *Pleasure*, to themselves, concerning any of which no Man could lay any thing to their Charge; and that they did not live like the great Men of *his People*, of whom God himself has left this reproachful Character, *That their Princes were Companions of Thieves, every one loving Gifts, and following after Rewards.* Chap. 2. *Dial. cum Tryph. p.* 308.

Nay, *Trypho* himself bears them this Testimony, though doubtless he intended it as a Reproach to them, That having from a vain Report chosen *Christ* to be their *Master*, they did for his Sake foolishly undervalue and throw away all the Enjoyments and Advantages of this World. Amongst us (says *Tatian*) there is no Affectation of *vain Glory*, no *Diversity* of Sentiments and Opinions; but separating ourselves from all vulgar and earthly Thoughts and Discourses, and having given up ourselves to the Commands of God to be govern'd by his Law, we abandon whatever seems but a-kin to Human Glory. They never met with Opportunities to have advanced and enriched themselves, but they declined and turned them off with a noble Scorn. When *Abgarus* the *Toparch* of *Edessa* offered *Thaddeus* (one of the Seventy Disciples) great Sums of Gold and Silver for the Pains he had taken, and the great Things he had done amongst them, he refused them with this Answer, *To what Purpose should we receive good Things from others, who have freely forsaken and renounced our own?* As indeed, in those times, Friends and Relations, Houses and Lands were chearfully parted with, when they stood in Competition with Christ; they could content themselves with the most naked Poverty, so it might but consist with the Profession of the Gospel. *Orat. con. Gra. p.* 167. *Euſ. Hiſt. Ecc. l.* 1. *c.* 15. *p.* 55.

When *Quintianus* the President, under *Decius* the Emperor, asked *Agatha* the Virgin-Martyr,

Part II. why, being deſcended of ſuch rich and *illuſtrious* Parents, ſhe would ſtoop to ſuch low and mean Offices as ſhe took upon her? She preſently anſwered him, *Our Glory and Nobility lies in this, that we are the Servants of Chriſt.* To the ſame Purpoſe was the Anſwer of *Quintinus* the Martyr under the *Diocleſian* Perſecution, when the Preſident asked him, How it came about, that he being a *Roman* Citizen, and the Son of a *Senator*, would truckle under ſuch a *Superſtition*, and worſhip him for a *God*, whom the *Jews* had *crucified?* The Martyr told him, That it was the higheſt Honour and Nobility to know and ſerve God; that the Chriſtian Religion, which he called Superſtition, ought not to be traduced with ſo baſe a Name, ſeeing it immediately guided its Followers to the higheſt Degrees of Happineſs: For herein it is that the Omnipotent God is revealed, the great Creator of Heaven and Earth, and his Son *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord, by whom all things were made, and who is in all things equal to his Father.

Martyr. ejus apud Sur. ad diem 5. Feb. tom. 1. ex S. Metaph.

Apud Sur. ad 31. Oct. tom. 5.

The Simplicity of Chriſtians then kept them from aſpiring after Honour and Greatneſs, and if at any time advanced to it, their great Care was to *keep themſelves unſpotted from the World*, as *Nazianzen* reports of his Brother *Cæſarius*, chief Phyſician to the Emperor *Conſtantius*, That tho' he was very dear to him (as he was to the whole Court) and advanced by him every Day to greater Honours and Dignities, yet *this* (ſays he) *was the chief of all*, that he ſuffered not the Nobility of his Soul to be corrupted by that Glory, and thoſe Delights that were round about him: But accounted this his chiefeſt Honour, that he was a *Chriſtian*; in Compariſon of which, all things elſe were to him but as a Sport and *Pageantry*. He look'd upon other things but as *Comick* Scenes, ſoon

In laud. Cæſar. frat. Orat. 10. p. 166.

ſoon up, and as ſoon over; but upon *Piety*, as the moſt ſafe and permanent Good, and which we can properly call our own, regarding that Piety eſpecially which is moſt inward and unſeen to the World. Chap. I.

The like he relates of his Siſter *Gorgonia*, as the Perfection of her excellent Temper, that ſhe did not more *ſeem* to be good, than ſhe did really *ſtrive* to be ſo; being peculiarly converſant in thoſe ſecret Acts of Piety which are viſible only to him, who ſees what is *hidden* and *ſecret*. To the Prince of this World ſhe left nothing, transferring all into thoſe ſafe and celeſtial Treaſuries that are above; ſhe left nothing to the Earth but her Body, changing all things for the Hopes of a better Life; bequeathing no other *Riches* to her Children, but an excellent *Pattern*, and a Deſire to follow her Example. The Truth is, as to Eſtate, they were not concern'd for more than what would ſupply the Neceſſities of Nature, or the *Wants* of others; not ſolicitous to get or poſſeſs ſuch Revenues as might make them the Objects either of Mens *Envy*, or their *Fear*; as may appear, amongſt others, by this Inſtance. *In laud. Gorgon. Orat.* II. *p.* 183.

Domitian the Emperor being inform'd that there were yet remaining ſome of Chriſt's *Kindred according to the Fleſh*, (the Nephews of *Judas* the Brother of our Lord, of the Race and Poſterity of *David*, which the Emperor ſought utterly to extirpate) he ſent for them, enquired of them, whether they were of the *Line of David?* They anſwer'd, they were. He asked what Poſſeſſions and *Eſtate* they had? They told him they had between them *thirty nine Acres of Land* (to the Value of about *nine thouſand Pence*) out of the Fruits whereof they both paid him *Tribute*, and *maintained* themſelves with their own hard Labour, whereto the *Hardneſs* and *Callouſneſs* of their Hands, *Euſeb. lib.* 3. *c.* 20. *p.* 89.

Part II. Hands, which they then shew'd him, bore witness. He then asked them concerning *Christ*, and the State of his *Kingdom*; to which they answer'd, That his *Empire was not of this World*, but Heavenly and Angelical, and which should finally take Place in the end of the World, when he should come *with Glory to judge both the Quick and the Dead, and to reward Men according to their Works*: Which when he heard, despising the Men upon the Account of their Meanness, he let them go without any Severity against them. Of *Origen* we read, that he was so great a Despiser of the World, that when he might have lived upon the Maintenance of others, he would not; but parted with his *Library* of Books to one that was to allow him only *four Oboli* a day; the Day he spent in laborious Tasks and Exercises, and the greatest Part of the Night in Study; he always remembred that Precept of our Saviour, *Not to have two Coats, not to wear Shoes, not anxiously to take Care for to-morrow*; nor would he accept the Kindness of others, when they would freely have given him some Part of their Estate to live on.

Id. lib. 6. c. 3. p. 205.

Not that the Christians of those times thought it *unlawful* to possess Estates, or to use the Blessings of Divine Providence; for tho' in those times of Persecution they were often forced to quit their Estates and Habitations, yet they did preserve their *Properties* entire, and industriously mind the *necessary* Conveniences of this Life, so far as was *consistent* with their Care of a better. There were indeed a sort of Christians called *Apostolici*, who in a fond Imitation of the *Apostles* left all they had, and gave up themselves to a voluntary Poverty, holding it not lawful to possess any thing: Hence they were also called *Apotactici*, or *Renouncers*, because they quitted and renounced whatsoever they had; but they were ever accounted infamous *Heretick*s:

Chap. 1.

reticks: They were, as *Epiphanius* tells us, the Deſcendants of *Tatian*, Part of the old *Cathari* and *Encratitæ*; together with whom they are put in a Law of the Emperor *Theodoſius*, and reckon'd amongſt the vileſt of the *Manichæan* Hereticks; mention'd alſo by *Julian* the *Apoſtate*, as a Branch of the *Galilæans*, as he calls the Chriſtians, by him compared to the *Cynick Philoſophers* amongſt the Heathens, for the neglecting of their Country, the abandoning of their Eſtates and Goods, and their looſe and rambling Courſe of Life; only herein different, that they did not, as thoſe *Galilæan Apotactiſtæ*, run up and down under a Pretence of Poverty to beg Alms. The Truth is, by the Account which both he and *Epiphanius* give of them, they ſeem to have been the very *Patriarchs* and Primitive Founders of thoſe *Mendicant* Orders, and Profeſſors of vow'd Poverty, which ſwarm ſo much in the Church of *Rome* at this day. But to return: The Chriſtians of thoſe days did not ſtudy thoſe Arts of *Splendor* and *Gallantry* which have ſince over-run the World, ſtately Palaces, coſtly Furniture, rich Hangings, fine Tables, curious Beds, Veſſels of Gold and Silver, the very Poſſeſſion of which (as *Clemens Alexandrinus* ſpeaks) creates Envy; they are rare to get, hard to keep, and, it may be, not ſo accommodate to Uſe. Will not a Knife cut as well *(ſays he)* tho' it have not an *Ivory Haft*, or be not garniſh'd with Silver, or an *Earthen* Baſon ſerve to waſh the Hands? Will not the *Table* hold our Proviſions, unleſs its Feet be made of *Ivory?* Or the Lamp give its *Light*, altho' made by a *Potter*, as well as if it were the Work of the *Goldſmith?* May not a Man ſleep as well upon a *mean* Couch, as upon a Bed of *Ivory?* Upon a *Goat-Skin*, as well as upon a *Purple* or *Phœnician* Carpet? Our *Lord* eat his Meat out of a *common* Diſh, and made his Followers ſit upon the *Graſs*,

Contr. Apoſtolic. Hæreſ. 61. p. 220.

Cod. Theod. lib. 16. tit. 5. de Hæret. l. 7.

De Cynic. Sect. Orat. 7. p. 417.

Pædag. lib. 2. c. 3. p. 160, 161.

Part II.

Graſs, and *waſhed* his Diſciples Feet, without ever fetching down a *Silver* Bowl from Heaven; he took the Water which the *Samaritaneſs* had drawn in an *Earthen Pitcher*, not requiring one of God, ſhewing how eaſy it was to quench his Thirſt; for he reſpected the *Uſe*, not the vain and ſuperfluous State of Things. This and much more he there urges to this excellent Purpoſe, to let us ſee how little a Chriſtian need be beholden to the World, if he be content with what's enough for the neceſſary Uſes of human Life.

De Orat. Domin. Orat. 5. *p.* 745. *tom.* 1. *Vid. Cyp. de Orat. Dom. p.* 192.

To this let me annex ſome Part of that Diſcourſe which *Gregory Nyſſen* has upon this Subject: The fluid and tranſitory Condition of Man's Life *(ſays he)* calls for a daily *Reparation* of the Decays of Nature. He therefore that looks no farther than to miniſter to the *Deſires* of Nature, and troubles not himſelf with vain anxious Thoughts for more than's *neceſſary*, lives little leſs than the Life of Angels, whilſt by a Mind content with little he imitates their Want of nothing. For this Cauſe we are commanded to ſeek only what's enough to keep the Body in its due State and Temper, and thus to addreſs our Prayers to God, *Give us our daily Bread.* Give us *Bread*, not *Delicacies* or *Riches*, not ſplendid and purple *Veſtures*, or rich golden *Ornaments*; not *Pearls* and Jewels, Silver *Veſſels*, large *Fields*, and great *Poſſeſſions*; not the Government of *Armies*, the Conduct of *Wars*, and Diſpoſal of *Nations*, not numerous *Flocks* and Herds of Cattle, or Multitudes of *Slaves*, and Servants, not Splendor and Gallantry in Publick; not Marble-*Pillars*, or *Brazen* Statues, or Silken *Carpets*, or *Quires* of *Muſick*, or any of thoſe Things by which the Soul is diverted, and drawn from more *Noble* and *Divine* Thoughts and Cares; but only *Bread*, which indeed is the true and common Staff of Man's Life.

Min. Fel. p. 10. *vid. Conſtit. Apoſtol. ib.* 2. *c.* 62. *p.* 886.

Nor

Nor were they more ſtudious of *Pleaſures* and Recreations *abroad*, than they were of Fineneſs and Bravery at *home*: They went not to Publick *Feaſts*, nor frequented the *Shews* that were made for the Diſport and Entertainment of the People; and this was ſo notorious, that the Heathens charged it upon them as Part of their *Crime*. Obſerve how he in *Minutius Felix* draws it up: The *Romans (ſays he)* govern and enjoy the World, while *you* in the mean time are careful and *mopiſh*, abſtaining even from *lawful* Pleaſures; you viſit not the *Shews*, nor are preſent at the *Pomps*, nor frequent the *publick* Feaſts; you abhor the holy *Games*, the ſacrificial *Meats* and *Drinks*, *crown* not your Heads with *Garlands*, nor *perfume* your Bodies with ſweet Odours; a gaſtly, fearful, and miſerable People. Which by that time that *Octavius* the Chriſtian comes to anſwer, he grants it all to be true, and tells him there was very good Reaſon why they ſhould abſtain from their Shews, Pomps, and Divertiſements, at which they could not be preſent without great Sin and Shame, without affronting their Modeſty, and offering a Diſtaſte and Horror to their Minds. And indeed they reckon'd themſelves particularly obliged to this by what they had vowed and undertaken at their Baptiſm, when they ſolemnly engaged to *renounce the Devil and all his Works, Pomps and Pleaſures, i. e.* (ſays S. *Cyril*) the Sights and Sports of the *Theatre*, and ſuch like *Vanities*. The Truth is, they looked upon the publick Sports and Paſtimes of thoſe days as the *Scenes* not only of *Folly* and *Lewdneſs*, but of great *Impiety* and *Idolatry*; as Places where the *Devil* eminently ruled, and reckon'd all his *Votaries* that came thither. Accordingly *Tertullian* tells us of a *Chriſtian Woman*, who going to the *Theatre*, was there poſſeſs'd by the Devil; and when the Evil Spirit at his caſting out was

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Pag. 30.

Catech. Myſt. 1. *p.* 510.

De ſpect. c. 26. *p.* 83.

Part II. was ask'd, how he durſt ſet upon a Chriſtian? he preſently anſwer'd, *I did but what was fit and juſt, for I found her upon my own Ground.*

Athan. leg. pro Chriſt. p. 2. Being thus affected towards the World, they could very willingly part with any thing that was deareſt to them, *Friends*, *Eſtate*, *Liberty*, or *Life* itſelf. We are not moved (*ſays one of their Apologiſts*) with the Loſs of our *Eſtates* which our Enemies wreſt from us, nor with the *Violence* that's offer'd to our *Credit* and Reputation, or if there be any thing of greater *Concernment* than theſe; for altho' theſe things are mightily prized and valued amongſt Men, yet can we deſpiſe and ſlight them: Nay, we cannot only, when *beaten*, refrain from ſtriking again, and make no *Reſiſtance* againſt thoſe that invade and ſpoil us; but to them that *ſmite one Cheek we can turn the other*; *and to them that take away the Coat, we can let them take the Cloak alſo.*

Orat. 1. p. 32. And I remember *Nazianzen* tells us, That of thoſe Excellencies and Endowments which God had given him, *Health*, *Wealth*, *Eſteem*, and *Eloquence*, he reaped this only Benefit, that he had ſomething which he could *contemn*, and by which he could ſhew that he infinitely valued *Chriſt* before them. The greateſt Endearment of this Life is *Relations*, and yet theſe too they could quietly reſign when God called for them. Memorable it is, what S. *Hierome* reports of *Melania*, a Lady of great Piety in his time, in whoſe Commendation *Paulinas*, Biſhop of *Nola*, ſpends a very large Epiſtle, eſpecially commending her for her *generous* and heroick Mind, *tam viriliter Chriſtiana*, that ſhe was ſomething above a Woman, and had the *Maſculine* Spirit of a Chriſtian. Of this Lady S. *Hierom* tells us, That her *Husband* lying dead by her, ſhe loſt *two of her Sons* at the ſame time; and when every one expected that ſhe ſhould break out into a violent Paſſion, tear her Hair, rent her Garments, and

Ad Paul. tom. 1. p. 160.

Epiſt. l. 2. Epiſt. 2.

and burst into Tears, she stood still, and at last falling down, as 'twere at the Feet of *Christ*, broke out into this Pious and Christian Resentment, *Lord, I shall serve thee more nimbly and readily, by being eased of the Weight thou hast taken from me.* Nay, so little Kindness had they for this World, that they cared not how *little* they stayed in it; and therefore readily offer'd themselves to *Martyrdom* at every Turn. *Tertullian* tells his Adversaries, that all those Plagues which God sent upon the World, what Damage soever they might do their Enemies, could not hurt them, because they had no other Concernment in this World, than as *soon* as they could to get out of it. This, he elsewhere tells us, the very *Gentiles* assign'd as one Reason, why the Christians were trained up in a Defiance of all the Sports and Pleasures of this Life, that they might be more willing to die; and that the Cords being cut by which they were tedder'd to this World, they might be more nimble and expedite for their Passage hence. Their main Designs were intent upon the Happiness of another World, and therefore they regarded not what they went through to come sooner to it. Being inflamed (says *Justin Martyr*) with the Desire of a pure and an *eternal* Life, we breathe after an *intimate* Converse with God the great Parent and Creator of the World, and make haste to *seal* our Confession with our *Blood*; being certainly persuaded that they shall attain to this State, who by their Actions study to approve themselves to God, that they follow after him, and are heartily desirous of Communion with him in that Life, where no Malice or Wickedness shall take place. This was the mighty Support they lean'd upon, the great Cordial with which they kept up their Spirits in those sad times of Suffering and Persecution, the firm *Belief* and Expectation which they had

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Apol. c. 41. *p.* 33.

De Spect. c. 1. *p.* 73.

Apol. 2. *p.* 57.

Part II. had of enjoying God in a better Life. They knew, that the more Haste their Enemies made to *break open the Cage* of their Bodies, the sooner their Souls would be at Liberty to *fly* to the Regions of Blessedness and Immortality. And indeed so much were their Thoughts fix'd upon this, so often did they use to comfort one another by discoursing of that *Kingdom* which they expected hereafter, that some of their Enemies over-hearing and mistaking them, accused them as *treasonable Affecters* of the *Empire*; when, alas! (as *Justin Martyr* assures the *Emperors*) they meant nothing less; which they might know by this, that being brought to Tryal, they freely confessed themselves to be Christians, tho' they certainly knew they must die for it: Whereas, (*said he*) did we expect an *Human Kingdom*, we would dissemble and deny it, and avoid Death, and so expect a more convenient Season to accomplish our Designs; but since our Hopes are not placed in any thing in this World, we regard not those that take away our Lives, well knowing they take nothing from us, but what we must needs lay down ourselves. It was their Care then continually to *keep Company* with *dying* Thoughts, and to dwell within the Prospect of Eternity; it being generally true of all, what S. *Hierom* particularly reports of *Marcella*, That she *lived* so as always believing that she should immediately *die*, and never put on her *Garments*, but it put her in Mind of her *Grave*, and of the *Sheet* that should wrap her up in the *House of Silence*.

Ib. p. 58.

Epitaph. Marcell. ad Princip. p. 119.

But besides the Influence which the Expectation of their particular *Dissolutions* had upon them, there was one thing which I doubt not did mightily contribute to their being *wean'd* from the World, and did strongly animate them to a quick and speedy Diligence about the Affairs of the other Life; and that

that was, the *Opinion* they generally had of the *Day of Judgment being near at hand.* An *Opinion* ſtarted early, as appears by that Caution which S. *Paul* gives the *Theſſalonians* about it, and it laſted for ſome Ages after, as is evident from ſeveral Paſſages in *Tertullian*, who always improves it to this purpoſe, that Men ſhould not unneceſſarily incumber themſelves with the Affairs of this Life, but carry themſelves as thoſe that were immediately paſſing hence. I conclude with that of *Juſtin Martyr:* Chriſtians (*ſays he*) dwell in their own Countries but as *Inmates* and *Foreigners*; they have all things common with other Men as *Fellow-Citizens*, and yet ſuffer all things as *Strangers* and *Foreigners:* Every *Foreign Region* is their *Country*, and every Country is *foreign* to them: They *marry* like other Men, and beget Children, but do not *expoſe* or neglect their Offspring; they *feaſt* in common, but do not *exceed* like other Men; they *are in the Fleſh*, but do not *live after the Fleſh*; dwell upon *Earth*, but their *Converſation is in Heaven.* Therefore he compares Chriſtians in this World to the *Soul* in the *Body*; as for other Reaſons, ſo eſpecially for this, that as the Soul lives *in* the Body, but is not *of* the Body; ſo Chriſtians dwell *in* the World, but are not *of* the World: An *immortal Spirit* dwells in a *mortal Tabernacle*, and Chriſtians, while they ſojourn in theſe *corruptible* Manſions, expect and look for an *incorruptible* State in Heaven.

2 *Theſ.* 2. 3, 4.

Vid. de cul. fœmin. lib. 2. *c.* 9. *ad uxor. lib.* 1. *c.* 5. *Epiſt. ad Diognet. p.* 497.

CHAP. III.

Of their Sobriety, in respect of their Garb and Apparel.

Much of the Temper of the Mind shewn in the outward Garb. The great Ends of Clothes, for Honesty, Necessity, Distinction. The Primitive Christians accommodated themselves to these. Careful to avoid both Singularity and Excess. Generally conformable to the sober Fashions of the Places where they lived. Whether when they turned Christian, they left off the Roman *Gown, and took up the* Pallium *or Cloak,* à Toga ad Pallium. *The Occasion of* Tertullian's *writing his excellent Book on that Subject. The* Pallium *principally worn by those that entred upon a Life of more than ordinary Strictness. Their great Care to keep a* Medium *between Costliness and Sordidness. This accounted Part of that Pomp and Vanity which they renounced in Baptism. The Vanity of excessive Garbs and Finery complain'd of by the Fathers in some of those times. Especially invective against Methods of artificial Beauty: What pleaded in Defence of it, by some Persons in those days, consider'd and answer'd out of the Fathers. That they were rich, no sufficient Argument to patronize the doing of it. Better ways of employing their Estates. Nor that they could do it without violating their Chastity. The Inconveniences of it with respect to others. That they did it to please their Husbands, answer'd.*

answer'd. This needless: Every wise and good Man content without it. Such Arts savour'd too much of lewd wanton Prostitutes. Painting and such Arts injurious to God, and a Disparagement of his Workmanship. This largely prosecuted out of Tertullian *and* Cyprian. *A memorable Story which* Theodoret *relates of his own Mother. True Beauty accounted to lie in a holy and vertuous Mind, and a pure and pious Life. Gay and Fantastick Persons fitly represented by the* Egyptian *Temples.* Nazianzen's *Description of his good Sister* Gorgonia. Chap. 3.

THE Primitive Christians being thus eminent for their Contempt of the World, 'tis easy to imagine that they were very *temperate* and *abstemious* in the Use of all the Pleasures and Conveniences of human Life, which we shall more particularly consider in these three Instances; their *Sobriety* in respect of *Garb* and *Apparel*, their *Temperance* in regard of *Food* and *Diet*, and their *Continence* or *Chastity*.

For the first, the *Care* about our *Garb* and *Dress*, it is one of those Instances of *Sobriety* which are to be conducted by the Rules of Religion and Reason, and which very much discover a vertuous or a vicious Temper: *There are three things* (as the Son of *Syrach* well observes) *that shew a Man what he is, his Attire, excessive Laughter, and his Gate.* There is not certainly a more open Evidence of a *vain Mind*, than a *vain Garb* and *Habit*. S. *Basil* discoursing what Habit does best beseem a *Christian*, tells us in general, that it ought to be such as most lively expresses the Meekness and Humility of the Mind; that good Men of old were so attired, and that we

Reg. sup. Disput. interrog. 22. p. 566. tom. 2.

Part II. are commanded, *having Food and Raiment, to be therewith content*; not ſtudying *Variety*, and which moſt commonly follows it, *Softneſs* and *Elegancy*, which are but Inſtruments to miniſter to Exceſs and Luxury, introduced into human Life thro' the idle and unneceſſary Arts of Looſeneſs and Effeminacy. 'Tis not enough (ſays *Tertullian*) that a Chriſtian be chaſte and modeſt, but he muſt appear to be ſo; a Vertue, of which he ſhould have ſo great a Store and Treaſure, that it ſhould flow from his *Mind* upon his *Habit*, and break from the Retirements of his *Conſcience* into the *Superficies* of his *Life*, as he there expreſſes it. More particularly S. *Baſil* tells us, That the Habit of a Chriſtian ought to be ſuitable to the two great *Ends* of Cloathing inſtituted by *God*, *viz. Honeſty* and *Neceſſity*; *Honeſty* to hide the leſs comely Parts of the Body, and to cover that Shame which Sin has brought upon Mankind: In Paradiſe *Innocency* was Man's only *Robe*, 'twas Sin brought in the *Figleaved* Coat; and what ſhould more induce us to be modeſt in our Apparel, than to remember, that our Clothes are *Monitors* of our Apoſtaſy, and that there's little Reaſon we ſhould *pride* ourſelves in that which is only a Cover for our *Shame? Neceſſity*; and ſo Clothes were deſign'd to keep the Body in convenient Warmth, and to defend it from thoſe Injuries and Extremities of the Air and Weather, which would otherwiſe ſoon rot down this Houſe of Clay. Now to both theſe Ends (he tells us) we ought to accommodate our Garments, not ſtriving for Variety, having ſome for Uſes at home, others for Oſtentation when we go abroad; but that whatever attains theſe Ends, is enough. But beſides theſe, there is a third *Uſe* and *End* of Clothes noted by *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and that is for *Diſtinction*, not only of *Sexes*, but of different *Ranks* and Degrees of Men; ſuch as agree beſt to Men's *Age*, *Perſons*,

De cultu fœmin. lib. 2. c. 13. p. 160.

Ib. p. 567.

Vid. Cyril. ad Illuminat. Catec. 4. p. 94.

Pædag. lib. 3. c. 11. p. 245.

Persons, *Shape*, *Nature*, or their several States and *Employments*; in these respects Men may use different and distinguishing Habits: Nay, he grants, that in some Cases Men may recede from the strict Rule and Discipline of this Affair, and that such Women as cannot otherwise gain upon their Husbands, may (if they require it) go a little more *trim* and neat, provided (as he there limits it) it be done only to *please* and gain upon their Husbands, and that they do not practise any Artifices of unlawful Beauty. Chap. 3.

Now that the *ancient Christians* governed themselves by these Rules in this Affair, is plain, in that they avoided both *Singularity* on the one hand, and *Excess* on the other, generally conforming themselves to the *decent* and *orderly* Customs and Fashions of the Times and Places where they lived. *Justin Martyr* giving his Friend an Account of the Christians, tells him, that they differ'd not from other Men, either in their *Country*, or *Speech*, or the *Usages* of the Civil Life: They dwell in their own Cities, use the same Language with other Men, nor have they any singular and extraordinary way of Life; they are not in any thing affected or fantastick; but inhabiting partly amongst *Greeks*, partly in *barbarous* Cities, as every one's Lot is fallen, they follow the Customs of their Country; and both in Clothes and Diet, and all other Affairs of outward Life, shew the excellent and admirable Constitution of their Discipline and Conversation. I am not ignorant of what some Learned Men would have us to believe, that in those times, when any turned from *Paganism* to *Christianity*, they were wont to *change* their *Habit*, to leave off the *Toga* or *Gown* (the common Habit almost in all Parts of the *Roman* Empire) and to take up the *Pallium* or *Cloak*; and this they think sufficiently countenanced by the Instance of *Tertullian*, who laying aside the *Epist. ad Diog. p.* 496.

Part II. Gown, and putting on the Cloak, was accuſed of Lightneſs and Inconſtancy by the People of *Carthage*, and bitterly perſecuted with the common Sarcaſm, *à Toga ad Pallium*, as one that had wantonly skipped from the *Gown* to the *Cloak*, *i. e.* from one Profeſſion to another; inſomuch that he was forced to write an Apology for himſelf, which he did in his Book *de Pallio*, where, with a great deal of ſatyrical and ſarcaſtick Wit, he retorts upon them, and vindicates himſelf from their Charge and Cavils. But that there was any ſuch *Change* of Habit at Perſons firſt coming over to Chriſtianity, I can ſee no Reaſon to believe; and for the Caſe of *Tertullian*, it makes nothing to the Purpoſe, unleſs it could be proved that he left off the *Gown* at his firſt Entrance upon the *Chriſtian* Religion, which will be hard to make out; for I am clearly of the Mind of the Learned *Salmaſius*, that he alter'd his Habit, and aſſumed the *Cloak*, not when he firſt became *Chriſtian*, but when he was made *Presbyter* of the Church of *Carthage*; whence it is called by him, according to his Dialect, *Sacerdos Habitus* (for ſo it is in all ancient *Manuſcripts*, and in the firſt *Edition* of *B. Rhenanus*, and not *Sacer Habitus*, as later Editions have it) the *Prieſt's Habit*, becauſe the *Chriſtian Prieſts* uſually wore it after their Entrance upon Holy Orders. For the better underſtanding of which, we are to conſider a little, that amongſt the *Greeks*, the *Philoſophick Pallium* or Cloak was not commonly worn, but was the proper Habit of Philoſophers, who profeſs'd a more ſevere and accurate Courſe of Life. Accordingly amongſt the *Chriſtians* thoſe who profeſſed themſelves to be ἀσκηταὶ, the more *ſtrict* and *exact* Obſervers of the Chriſtian Diſcipline, whether they were *Laity* or *Clergy*, aſſumed this Habit to themſelves. And becauſe the Clergy in thoſe times generally took upon them this auſtere

Præfat. in Comment. Tertul. de Pallio.

Tertul. de Pall. c. 4.

Vid. Tert. ex Edit. B. Rhenani. p. 620. Vid. etiam Salm. in loc.

ſtere and philoſophick way of Life, this Garb was most peculiar to them; and this probably they did the rather, not only becauſe this was the moſt plain and ſimple Garment in itſelf, but becauſe they ſuppoſed the *Apoſtles* (whom they ſtrove to imitate) wore this Habit, as is plain they did, as from other Paſſages in the *New Teſtament*, ſo from S. *Paul*'s ſending for the *Cloak which he left at* Troas. Therefore the Author of the *Apoſtolical Hiſtory*, who ſhelters himſelf under the Name of *Abdias Babylonius*, certainly forgot himſelf, when deſcribing the Habit of S. *Bartholomew* the *Apoſtle*, he made it ſo trim and fine: *Veſtitus*, ſays he, *Colore* (doubtleſs it ſhould be *Colobio*) *albo*, &c. *he was clothed in a* white *Coat*, *beſet with Studs of* Purple, *over which he had a white* Cloak, *having Purple* Gems *at each Corner of it*; a Piece of Gallantry unknown to the Plainneſs of thoſe times, and unſuitable to the Profeſſion of that Holy Man. Indeed as Plenty and Proſperity began to flow in upon the Church, this ſimple and modeſt Garment was laid aſide, and the Clergy took upon them a more rich and ſplendid Garb; inſomuch that when *Euſtathius* Biſhop of *Sebaſtia* took upon him to wear the *Philoſophick Cloak*, and perſuaded his Followers alſo to uſe it, he was for this very Reaſon depoſed by his own Father *Eulalius*, Biſhop of *Cæſarea*, becauſe wearing a Habit unſuitable to the Miniſterial Order; which Sentence was, not long after, ratify'd by the Synod of *Gangra*, and a *Canon* made againſt it.

Chap. 3.

Lib. 8. *Fol.* 96. *p.* 2.

Socrat. Hiſt. Eccl. lib. 2. *c.* 43. *p.* 156.

Vid. Concil. Gangr. Can. 12.

From what has been ſaid, it may appear, that altho' the *Clergy*, and ſuch as entred upon a more ſtrict and *aſcetick* Courſe of Life, had a Habit peculiar to themſelves; yet the generality of Chriſtians differed not from the *common* Garb. They were indeed exceeding careful to avoid all ſuch as ſavour'd of *Coſtlineſs* and *Finery*, chooſing ſuch as expreſſed the greateſt Lowlineſs and Innocency.

Part II.

Ib. ubi ſupra, p. 244.

The Garment that we ſhould wear (ſays *Clemens* of *Alexandria*) ought to be mean and frugal, not *curiouſly* wrought with divers Colours (the Emblem of *Craftineſs* and *Deceit*) but *white*, to denote our embracing and profeſſing *Simplicity* and Truth; our outward Cloathing is an Indication of the Temper of our Manners: That's true Simplicity of Habit, which takes away what's vain and ſuperfluous; that the beſt and moſt ſolid Garment, which is furtheſt from Art and Curioſity, and moſt apt to preſerve and keep warm the Body.

Pont. Diac. in vit. Cyp. p. 12.

S. *Cyprian* ever obſerved a due *Decorum* in his *Garb* as well as his *Countenance*; his Aſpect was *grave* and yet *chearful*; neither a frowning *Severity*, nor an over-pleaſant *Merrineſs*, but ſuch a happy Mixture of both, that it was hard to ſay whether he was more to be *feared* or *loved*, but that he equally deſerved both: And juſt ſuch was his *Garb*, ſober and moderate, keeping a juſt Diſtance both from *Slovenlineſs* and *Superfluity*; it neither argued him to be ſwelled with Pride, nor infected with a miſerable and ſordid Mind.

Ad Olymp. Ep. 2. tom. 4. p. 617. & 623.

Chryſoſtom, amongſt other things, eſpecially commends *Olymphias* (a Woman of great Birth and Eſtate, and of no leſs Piety) for the incredible Modeſty and Meanneſs of her Attire, not much better than that of the pooreſt Beggar; having nothing in her Garb or Gate that was *feigned* or *gaudy*, nothing elaborate or artificial; which things, *ſays he*, were the Colours, the bright and beautiful Repreſentations of her Vertue, whereby that Wiſdom and *Divine* Philoſophy, that lay hidden in her Mind, was externally painted and ſhadowed out. So far were they then from the Vanity and Affection of Pomp and Bribery, of dazzling the Eye with rich coſtly Ornaments, that they thought they could never ſeem mean enough; and this they looked upon themſelves as eſpecially bound to,

to, by the *Promise* which they had made at *Baptism*, when they *renounced* the *Devil*, and his whole *Pomp* and *Service*, as the same *Father* elsewhere informs us. Chap. 3.

Hom. 21. ad pop. Antioch. tom. 1. p. 244.

It cannot be denied, but that the Fathers frequently complain of, and smartly declaim against the Vanity and Folly of some in those times (Women especially, by the *Weakness* of their Sex, more propense to the Excesses of Pride and Superfluity) who gave up themselves to all the Arts of Fineness and Gallantry; and out of an Emulation to the Heathen Ladies, amongst whom they lived, they affected all manner of *Pomp* and *Elegancy*, striving to be as rich and gawdy, not as they *ought*, but as they *could* make themselves: Whose excessive Prodigality *Tertullian* does thus no less *elegantly* than *sarcastically* describe: A great Estate (*says he*) is drawn out of a *little* Pocket; it's nothing to expend *many thousand Pounds* upon one String of *Pearls*; a weak tender Neck can make a shift to carry about *whole Woods and Lordships:* Vast Sums of Money borrowed of the *Banker*, and noted in his Account-Book to be repayed every Month with Interest, are weighed at the *Beam* of a thin slender *Ear*. So great is the Strength of Pride and Ambition, that even the *weak* feeble Body of one Woman shall be able to carry the *Weight* and Substance of so many Pounds taken up at *Usury*. This was looked upon as a very great Sin. *Clemens Alexandrinus* censures it very deep; that though Gluttony and Intemperance be great Vices, yet not to be compared with a *nice over-curious* Study of Fineness and Bravery. I suppose he means in respect of its insatiable and unbounded Nature: For so he adds; A well-furnish'd Table, and Cups that go round, may quickly stop the Mouth of a hungry Stomach; but where there is a nice Affectation of *Bravery*, of *Gold*, *Purple*, or *Jewels*, there not the Treasures of the *Creation*; not what's

De Cult. Fœm. lib. 1. c. 8. p. 153. In the *Lat. decies sestertium*, which in our Money is seventy eight thousand one hundred and twelve Pounds, ten Shillings.

Pædag. lib. 3. c. 2. p. 219.

Part II. what's *above*, or *under* Ground; not the Spoils of the *Tyrian* Sea; not the Fraughts from *India*, or *Ethiopia*; no, nor *Pactolus* with his golden Streams, would ſuffice. Nay, ſuch Perſons, tho' as rich as *Midas*, would not yet think themſelves rich or fine enough. But that which the Fathers do moſt ſeverely cenſure and cry out againſt, is not only the *Expence* and Coſtlineſs of their Cloaths and Jewels, but the *Arts* which they uſed, to add *greater* Beauty and Handſomneſs to themſelves, than God and Nature had beſtowed upon them. This, it ſeems, the Pride and Folly of ſome Chriſtian Women had arrived to; which the Zeal and Piety of thoſe times did vehemently condemn and proteſt againſt. It may not be amiſs to conſider, what the *Gallants* of thoſe times *pleaded* for themſelves, and what was returned in *anſwer* to them. Sometimes they pleaded, that they were rich, and had great Eſtates, and ought therefore to live *like themſelves*, and to make uſe of the Eſtates that God had given them. To this, *Cyprian* anſwers, That they only are truly rich, that are rich *in* and *towards* God; that the World ought to be *deſpiſed*, the *Pomps* and *Delights* whereof we then *renounced*, when we happily turned to God, with the *Love* of whom *all that is in the World, the Luſt of the Fleſh, the Luſt of the Eye, and the Pride of Life is not conſiſtent:* That the Uſe of Riches, in this Caſe, is to be governed by juſt and moderate Meaſures; the Apoſtle commanding all Women, how rich ſoever, *to adorn themſelves in modeſt Apparel, with Shamefacedneſs and Sobriety, not with broidered Hair, or Gold, or Pearls, or coſtly Array; but (which becomes Women profeſſing Godlineſs) with good Works:* S. *Peter* alſo requiring of them, not the *outward* adorning of Gold or fine Apparel, but the hidden *Ornament of the Heart.* That though they were rich, yet they were to conſult the Honour and Modeſty of their Profeſſion, and might not go

De diſcipl. & habit. virgin. p. 164.

to

to the utmoſt Bounds of what was lawful, ſome things being *lawful*, which were not *expedient*; eſpecially when by their wanton and laſcivious Dreſs, they might be a means to kindle in the Breaſts of others, the Flames of an unchaſte and unlawful Paſſion, and ſo prove the Occaſion of their Ruin: That if they thought themſelves bound to uſe the Eſtate that God had given them, God hath ſhewn them a *more excellent Way*, to relieve the *Hungry*, and feed the *poor Members of Chriſt*; that this was the beſt Art of improving Riches, and the way to lay them up in ſafe and unfailing Treaſuries, where we may be ſure to reap the Fruit of them another day; and not to throw them away upon Arts of Beauty, upon vain and fantaſtick Dreſſes. This is the Sum of that good Man's Reaſonings in the Caſe. Chap. 3. *Vid. Conſtit. Apoſt. lib. 1. c. 3. p. 804.*

Sometimes they pleaded, that they might beautify and honour the Body, without any Danger of violating their *Chaſtity*, or ſetting open the Caſement for Luxury to fly in upon them. *Tertullian* anſwers, Let them that had a mind to it glory in the *Fleſh*, that for us we have no Deſigns of Glory; partly as being highly unſuitable to us, who by the Law of God are under the Profeſſion of *Humility*; partly becauſe all Glory (to us eſpecially) is vain and ſwelling; how much more that which ariſes from the Fleſh? If we muſt glory, 'tis much fitter for us who follow *Spiritual* Things, to pleaſe ourſelves in the *Excellencies* of the *Spirit*, than in thoſe of the *Fleſh*; let us rejoice in thoſe things about which we are employed, and ſeek *Glory* from thoſe things, from which we hope for *Salvation*. A Chriſtian may indeed *glory* in the Fleſh, but it is when for the Sake of *Chriſt* it is *torn* in Pieces, that the *Spirit* may be crowned; not that it may prove a Snare to attract the Eyes and Sights of young Mens ungovernable Paſſions after it, then when 'tis tormented for confeſſing the *Chriſtian* Name: When *De cult. fœmin. lib. 2. c. 3. p. 155.*

a *Woman*

Part II. a *Woman* is found ſtronger than the *Man* that torments her, when ſhe ſuffers *Fires*, or *Croſſes*, or *Swords*, or *wild Beaſts*, that ſhe may receive the Crown; theſe (ſays *Cyprian*) are the precious *Jewels* of the Fleſh, theſe the much better *Ornaments* of the *Body*. So that (as *Tertullian* goes on) Beauty being altogether ſo unuſeful to us, ought to be *deſpiſed* by them that want it, and to be *neglected* by them that *have* it. A good Woman that's content with her own native Beauty, has not that Occaſion to betray her to Luſt and Folly; and if ſhe had, it would become her, not to *promote*, but *hinder* it. Sometimes again, they pretended they did it only to *pleaſe* their *Husbands*, and that they might appear more *lovely* and *acceptable* to them: To which Plea, as being moſt ſpecious and plauſible, I obſerve eſpecially *Three* things returned by way of anſwer.

Ut ſupra p. 163.

Tert. Ib. c. 4.

Id. ibid. *Firſt*, That to deſign the pleaſing of their Huſbands by ſuch Arts as theſe, was altogether *needleſs*, ſeeing every wiſe and good Man cannot but like his Wife beſt without them. No Wife (ſays *Tertullian*) can ſeem *deformed* to her own Husband, who doubtleſs was well enough pleaſed with her, either for her *Temper*, or her *Beauty*, when he firſt made choice of her: Let none fear their Husbands will more diſtaſte and diſlike them for abſtaining from *artificial* Compoſitions, for every Husband is a rigid Exacter of his Wife's Chaſtity; and conſequently they can be of no Advantage to this End, whether he be a *believing*, or an *unbelieving* Huſband, a *Gentile*, or a *Chriſtian*: If a *Chriſtian*, then he will not require any ſuch *foreign* Beauty, as not being taken with thoſe Accompliſhments which the *Gentiles* do account ſo; if a *Gentile*, then according to that vile Opinion which they have of us *Chriſtians*, let her do what ſhe can, he will ſuſpect her to be naught. For whoſe Sake therefore ſhould ſhe ſo curiouſly dreſs, ſo delicately nurſe

and

and nouriſh up her Beauty? for a *believing* Huſband? he requires it not: For an *Infidel?* he'll never believe it to be *true*; Why then ſhould ſhe ſo much deſire to *pleaſe* either one that *ſuſpects* it, or one that does not deſire it? Chap. 3.

Secondly, That theſe looſe delicate Arts came too near the Practice of lewd wanton *Proſtitutes*, who made uſe of theſe Ways and Tricks for no other End but to *enveigle* Men into their Embraces. The Bravery of Ornaments and Apparel, and the additional Enticements of Beauty are chiefly uſed (as *Cyprian* tells them) by Proſtitutes and unchaſte Women; and that no Womens *Garb* is more *rich* and *gaudy*, than theirs, whoſe *Modeſty* is moſt *vile* and *cheap*. And this he tells us the *Scripture* ſhadows out by the *Woman that was arrayed in purple and ſcarlet Colour, and decked with Gold and precious Stones and Pearls; having a golden Cup in her Hand, full of Abominations and Filthineſs of her Fornication.* But chaſte and modeſt Virgins ſhun the Dreſſes of the Defiled, the Habit of the Shameleſs, the Badges of the Stews, the Ornaments of light wanton Women. Whereas all other Creatures (ſays *Clemens Alexandrinus*) Birds and other Beaſts are content with their own natural Beauty and Colours; *Woman* only, as if ſhe were inferior to the Beaſts, thinks herſelf ſo deform'd, as that there's Need to repair the Defect by external, bought, and borrowed Beauty: For while by infinite Arts of curious and coſtly Dreſſes (ſome whereof he there particularly mentions) they ſeek to *enſnare* them, who, Children-like, are apt to admire every thing that's ſtrange and gaudy, they ſhew themſelves to be Women that have put off Shame and Modeſty; and whoever (* *ſays he*) calls them ſo, ſhall do them no Wrong, as carrying the *Signs* and Repreſentations of it in their very Faces.

Ubi ſupr. p. 165. *vid. Tert. de cult. fœmin. lib.* 1. *c.* 4.

Pædag. lib. 3. *c.* 2. *p.* 220.

* *De cult. Fœmin. lib* 2. *c.* 5. *p.* 156.

Vid. Conſtit. Ap. lib. 1. *c.* 8. *p.* 823.

Cl. Alex. Pædag. l. 3. *c.* 11. *p.* 249.

De Diſcipl. & Hab. virg. p. 166.

Thirdly,

Part II. *Thirdly*, They mainly insisted upon this, that these Arts were *injurious to God*, and a *Disparagement* to his *Workmanship*. We are not (says *Tertullian*) to seek after Neatness and Finery beyond what is simple and *sufficient*, and what *pleases* God, against whom they offend, who are not satisfied with his Workmanship; an Argument which he there prosecutes with great Severity. S. *Cyprian* treads in his *Master's* Steps, and prosecutes the same Argument with a great deal of Zeal and Shrapness: Amongst other things he tells us, that these additional Arts are a bold and *sacrilegious* Attempt, and an high Contempt of God; that it is to reform what God has *form'd*, to alter and change his Work, and, as much as they can, to *disfigure* that Person, which God has *made after his own Image and Likeness*: That such a one has cause to fear, lest when the Day of *Resurrection* comes, he that *made* them should not *know* them, nor receive them when they come for the promised Rewards. Accordingly he brings in the great *Censor* and *Judge* of the World thus speaking to such a Person: *This is none of my Workmanship, nor is this our Image and Likeness; thou hast defiled thy Skin with false Compositions, changed thy Hair into an adulterous Colour, thy Face counterfeit, thy Shape corrupt, thy Countenance quite another thing; thou can'st not behold God, thine Eyes not being the same which God created, but which the evil Spirit has infected; thou hast imitated the fiery, sparkling, and glittering Eyes of the Serpent; of thine Enemy hast thou learnt to be over-trim and neat, and with him like to receive thy Portion.* And are not these (*says he*) things fit to be thought on by the Servants of God, and to be the daily Objects of their *Care* and *Fear?*

Hist. Religios. c. 9. in vit. Pet. p. 343.

I cannot but in this Place set down a Passage which *Theodoret* reports of his own *Mother*; That in her younger Years having a Distemper in one of her Eyes,

Eyes, which had baffled all the Arts of *Physick*, she was at length persuaded to make her Address to one *Peter*, famous for the Gift of *Miracles!* who lived near *Antioch* a very severe and ascetick Course of Life: And to render herself (as she thought) the more *considerable* in his Eye, she put on all her *Bravery*; her richest *Robes*, her *Pendents*, and Chains of *Pearl*, and whatever could render her *fine* and *splendid*. No sooner was she come to him, but the severe and *uncomplimental* Man at first sight bluntly entertained her with this Discourse: Tell me, *Daughter*, suppose an excellent *Artist* having drawn a Picture according to all the Laws and Rules of Art, should expose and hang it forth to View; and another rude and unskilful *Bungler* coming by, should find fault with this excellent Piece, and attempt to *amend* it, draw the *Eye-brows* to a greater Length, make the Complexion *whiter*, or add more *Colour* to the Cheeks; Would not the true Author be justly angry, that his Art was disparaged and undervalued, and *needless* Additions made to the Piece by an unskilful Hand? And so 'tis here; Can we think that the great *Artificer* of the World, the *Maker* and *Former* of our Nature, is not, and that justly, angry, when you accuse his incomprehensible Wisdom and Perfection of Unskilfulness, and Want of Knowledge? For you would not add your *Reds*, *Whites*, or *Blacks*, did you not think your Bodies needed these Additions; and while you think so, you *condemn* your Creator for *Weakness* and *Ignorance*: But know, that he has *Power* answerable to his *Will*, and as the *Psalmist* tells us, *The Lord has done all Things as he pleased*: And he that takes care of what is *good* for all, would not give what is *evil* and *hurtful* unto any. Corrupt not therefore the *Image* of God, nor attempt to *add*, what he in his infinite Wisdom thought not fit to *give*: Study not to invent this adulterate Beauty, which even to chaste Persons Chap. 3.

oft

Part II. oft proves a Cauſe of Ruin, by becoming a Snare to them that look upon it. The *holy Man* ſaid no more, and the *young Lady* preſently found herſelf wounded with the Force of his Reaſonings, but would not leave him till ſhe had obtained the End of her Errand; which he granted, not without great Importunity, and an humble and modeſt referring all to the *Grace of God*, and ſo ſent her home with a double Cure; her Body cured of its Diſtemper, and her Mind of its Pride and Vanity: And ſhe ever after led a moſt humble, ſober, and pious Life.

But it were to tranſcribe whole Books, to tell you what the Fathers (theſe three that I have ſo often mentioned eſpecially) have ſaid in this Caſe, the Cauſe being not more copiouſly than *elegantly* managed by them; and thither I refer the capable Reader, who has any farther Curioſity for theſe things. The *true* Beauty of a Chriſtian in thoſe Days lay not in *external* and adventitious Ornaments, but in the *Goodneſs* and *Purity* of the Mind: The Beauty of the Body (ſays *Clemens* of *Alexandria*) conſiſts in a *good Complexion*, and in an *apt Symmetry* and Proportion of its Parts; but the greateſt Beauty in the World is that of the *Soul*, when 'tis adorn'd with the *Holy Spirit*, and the excellent Graces of it, *Juſtice*, *Prudence*, *Fortitude*, *Temperance*, the *Love of Goodneſs and Modeſty*; which is the brighteſt and moſt lovely Ornament that the Eye of Man can behold. It is not (*ſays he*) the exterior Aſpect of the Man that is to be regarded, but the Mind that is to be furniſhed and adorned with Goodneſs and Vertue: And therefore he wittily compares thoſe Women that *curiouſly* trick and trim up the Body, but neglect how it is with the Soul within, to the *Egyptian* Temples; look upon their *Out-ſide*, and they are moſt *ſplendid* and *magnificent*, encompaſſed with delicate Groves, built with large Entries, and ſtately *Portico's*, ſurrounded with ſeveral

Pædag. l. 3. *c.* 11. *p.* 248.

Ibid. c. 2. *p.* 216.

several Rows of *Pillars*, the Walls both within and without set off with *Stones* of several Countries curiously wrought and carved, the Temples themselves garnish'd with *Gold*, *Silver*, *Amber*, and all the glittering and *precious* Stone that *India* or *Ethiopia* can afford; but enter within them, and enquire for the *Deity* that is there worshipped, and you shall be *gravely* shewed behind a Curtain a *Cat* or a *Crocodile*, or a *Serpent* of that Country, or some such *ill-favoured* Beast, which is the *residentiary* or *tutelar* Deity of that Place. And just such (*says he*) do those Women seem to me, who trim themselves with *Gold*, and are taken up with curling their Hair, painting their Faces, blacking their Eyes, colouring their Locks, and other undue Arts of Softness and Luxury, beautifying the *outward Rail and Fence*; but if a Man look within the Veil and Covering of the Temple, what is under all this Gayness and Finery, he should be so far from meeting with what was truly beautiful, that it will excite his Horrour and Aversation: For he shall not find the *Image* of God dwelling there, as might reasonably be expected; but instead thereof some *filthy* and treacherous *Beast*, that possesses the most inward Recesses of the Soul, a *lustful Ape*, or that *crafty Serpent* that devours the Understanding of a Man, and turns his Soul into a *Nest* or *Den*, full of most deadly Venom, and the Poison of his Error and Deceit. Chap. 3.

I conclude this with the Account which S. *Gregory* gives of his Sister *Gorgonia*: That she used no Gold to make her fine, *no yellow Hair* ordered into Knots and Curls, nor any other Tricks to make her Head a *Scene* and *Pageantry*; no loose and *transparent* Garments, no *Lustre* of Stones and Jewels enlightning the Air round about, and reflecting Splendor upon them that wear them; no Devices and Arts of Painting, no Affectation of Beauty that may be easily bought, no counter-working God's *Nazian. in Laud. Gor. Or.* 11. *p.* 181.

Part II. Creation, dishonouring, reproaching, covering his Workmanship with false and deceitful Colours, suffering a *spurious* and *suppositious* Beauty to steal away that natural Image which ought to be kept entire to God and the future State: All this was far from her; and though she very well understood the several *Modes* and *Garbs* of *Bravery* amongst Women, yet she thought none so honourable as the Manner of her Life, and that *inward* Brightness that was lodg'd in her Mind. The only *Redness* that pleased her, was that which was the Fruit of *Blushing* and *Modesty*; no other *Whiteness* but what came through *Fasting* and *Abstinence*, leaving *Fucus's* and *Paintings*, and *living Pictures*, and fading Beauty to those that belong to Plays and *Theatres*, and to such, for whom to *blush* and be *ashamed* is a *Shame* and a *Disgrace*. To which I add that of *Tertullian*, who after he had smartly condemned and confuted the Arts of unlawful Beauty, the Vanity of going in too curious, costly and excessive Dresses, concludes with this Counsel to the Women of his time, to cloath themselves with the *Silks of Honesty*, the *fine Vestures of Piety*, the *Purple of Modesty*; and being *thus beautified and adorned* (says he) *God himself will be your Lover.*

De cult. fœmin. l. 2. c. 13. ad fin.

CHAP. IV.

Of their great Temperance and Abstinence.

A vicious Curiosity about Meats and Drinks, a great Temptation. Severely forbidden by the Christian Law. The ancient Christians curious only of such Diet as ministred to Health. They gratified not Ease and Delicacy.

licacy. The great Inconveniences of Intemperance either in Meats or Drinks. Their chief Care about ſpiritual Food. For other things, content with any Proviſions, manifeſted in ſeveral Inſtances. An over-nice and ſuperſtitious Abſtinence from ſome Kinds of Food, condemned. The Inſtance of Alcibiades *the Martyr, out of* Euſebius. *Chriſtians unjuſtly accuſed by the Heathens of Exceſs and Prodigality in their Feaſtings.* Thyeſtian *Suppers laid to their Charge. The Charge in both Parts of it denied, and fully refuted by* Tertullian, *and other Chriſtian Apologiſts.* Chap. 4.

AMongſt the many Temptations that beſiege the Life of Man, there is ſcarce any into which we are more eaſily betrayed, than into a *vicious Curioſity* about Meats and Drinks, and the Exceſſes of an unruly Appetite; therefore it is, that the Chriſtian Religion does ſo frequently inculcate upon us the Precepts of *Sobriety* and Temperance; to be *temperate in all things, to watch and be ſober, to caſt off the Works of Darkneſs, to walk honeſtly as in the Day, not in Rioting and Drunkenneſs, not in Chambering and Wantonneſs, not in Exceſs of Wine, Revellings and Banquetings; to take heed that our Hearts be not at any time overcharged with Surfeiting and Drunkenneſs, and that we be not, as the Men of the old World, brutiſhly taken up with Eating and Drinking when the Flood came and ſwept all away.* The Law of Chriſt commands to *faſt often, to keep under the Body, and to make no Proviſion for the Fleſh:* If Nature, regularly governed, be content with *little*, Religion will teach us to be content with leſs. Theſe Rules the firſt Chriſtians exactly tranſcribed into their Lives, being the greateſt Inſtances of

Part II. real Abstinence and Mortification, which they both *practised* themselves and *pressed* upon others: They knew very well, that God had given Men a *Charter* of Freedom indifferently to use the Creatures, and to enjoy them in some Degree, not only for *Necessity* but *Delight*; but yet were afraid to go so far as they might, or to do any thing that might look towards Excess, or argue an irregular and unsober Mind: They contented themselves with such Provisions as were conducive to *Health* and *Strength*, without any studied seeking after those that were more *luscious* and *delightful*. 'Tis very true what S. *Basil* observes, that by reason of Mens different *Ages* and Course of Life, their different *Tempers* and Constitutions of Body, and other Circumstances, no one fix'd and certain Rule can be prescribed in this Case: But yet our Food and Diet ought for the main to be regulated by the general End of it, which is not wantonly to please the *Palate*, but to minister to *Health*, and to repair the Weakness and Decays of Nature. Many (says *Clemens Alexandrinus*) like brute Beasts, *live* only that they may *eat*; but for us, we are commanded to *eat*, that we may *live*: For Food and Pleasure is not the *Work* and Design for which we live in the World, our Residence here being in order to an incorruptible Life; and therefore our Nourishment ought to be easy and simple, and such as is subservient to the two main Ends of *Life*, *Health and Strength*. We ought to choose such Food (as *Justin Martyr* tells his Friends) not as may gratify our *Ease* and *Delicacy*, but make our Lives *useful* and *serviceable*; and if at any time overtaken with Want, we should quietly acquiesce in that State; and therefore a little after he smartly declaims against all Excess. Wine (*says he*) is neither to be drank daily to *Excess*, nor to be used as commonly as *Water*: Both indeed are God's *Creatures*; but

Reg. fus. disput. interrog. 19. *tom* 2. *p.* 560.

Pædag. l. 2. *c.* 1. *p.* 139.

Epist. ad Zen. & Seren. p. 506.

p. 51.

but *Water* neceſſary, *Wine* given only to help and relieve the Body; which [*immoderately taken*] chains up the *Tongue*, ſparkles *Fire* out of the *Eyes*, makes the *Legs* tremble, and the Underſtanding being gone, readily takes off its Cup of deadly *Poiſon*: Contrary to God's Ordination, it turns the peaceable *Inſtruments* of Husbandry into *Swords* and *Spears*. It may indeed be neceſſary, ſparingly to drink Wine both Winter and Summer; but he that drinks it to *Exceſs*, as a Man that takes over-much of a Medicine, like a Dog or a Swine, betrays his own Shame. But above all Men in the World, it leaſt becomes us [*Chriſtians*] as if we were Votaries to Luxury, to abuſe the Creatures of God, and to make uſe of *Thirſt*, as a Pretence to Drunkenneſs, ſeeing we ought to drink no more than what will ſerve to *quench* our Thirſt; not like thoſe who ſwallowing down Wine, as Men do drink in a burning Fever, quickly make an End of themſelves thro' their Intemperance. Nor are we leſs to take heed of *Gluttony*, contenting ourſelves with a *ſpare* Diet, and ſuch only as is neceſſary; not giving way to the infinite and unſatisfied Cravings of a nice and intemperate Appetite, which will have a thouſand Pretences to defend itſelf; but ruling ourſelves according to the wiſe *Sentence* of him who ſaid τροφαῖς δεῖ χρηστέον ἵνα τὸ μὴ πεινῆν, *That we are to eat only to ſatisfy our Hunger*. Thus that ancient Father. To this Purpoſe alſo *Clemens Alexandrinus* diſcourſes at large, repreſenting the great Evils and Inconveniences of Gluttony and Exceſs; that it waſtes the *Eſtate*, ruins the *Body* by impairing its Health, debauching the Stomach, deflowering its Taſte, begetting an ill Habitude and Temper, and ſowing it with the Seeds of all Diſeaſes: It dulls the *Mind*, and renders it inept and ſluggiſh, and prepares it for the Entertainment of any Vice or Wickedneſs: That altho'

Chap. 4.

Ut ſupr. Cap. 1, 2. per tot.

Part II. we are not absolutely bound to abstain from Variety of Meats, yet we are not to make them our Desire or Study, especially such as savour of Niceness and Delicacy, and are apt to pamper and excite Lust and Wantonness; for though 'tis true all things were especially made for Man's Sake, yet it is not convenient to make use of all, and at sometimes less than at others; to the advantageous Use of a Thing, respect being to be had, not only to the Thing itself, but to the *Time*, *Occasion*, and *Manner* of it: That therefore our Meals for the main should be *light* and *easy*, not mixed with *Variety* of Dainties, but such as may prepare for *Fasting*, and the Exercises of Religion. Upon this Account S. *Cyprian*, in an Epistle wherein he gives Directions about Prayer, advises them (and to make the Counsel more effectual, tells them, that he was *warned* of it by immediate *Revelation* from God) to eat and drink soberly and sparingly, that outward Snares might not enfeeble that Heavenly Vigour and Sprightliness that was in their Breasts, lest their Minds being over-charged with too plentiful Meals, might be less *watchful unto Prayer*. The same Counsel S. *Hierom* gives to *Læta* about the Education of her Daughter, that her Diet should be thin and mean, and that we should never eat more, than she might arise with some *Appetite*, so as that after Meals she might be presently fit either to read or sing *Psalms*.

Ad Presb. & Diac. ep. 7. p. 18.

Ad Læt. tom. 1. p. 57.

When at any time invited to publick Solemnities, as *Marriages* and the like, the Prudence of the Church thought fit to lay Restraints upon them, and not only to forbid them *light* and *ludicrous* Actions, as *leaping* or *dancing*, but that they should *dine* and *sup gravely* and *modestly*, as becomes Christians.

Conc. Laod. Can. 53.

The chief Care of Christians then was to become Partakers τῆς ἄνω τροφῆς τ θείας, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* styles it, of that *Divine Food that is from above*, and that only is capable to give real Satisfaction, little

Ib. p. 144.

little regarding what Provisions they had (so they had but any) for that Part that dwelt here below. When *Julian* the Emperor, to raise Money for his Wars, began to squeeze and oppress the Christians, he sent amongst others to S. *Basil* (who had formerly been his Fellow-Student at *Athens*) for a thousand Pounds; the Answer he sends him was, that it could not be expected there, where he had not so much Provision before-hand as would serve for one day; that there were no Arts of *Cookery* at his House, nor Knives *stained* with the Blood of slaughtered Provisions; that his greatest Dainties were a few *Pot-herbs*, a piece of Bread, and a little sour *vapid* Wine; no such Exceedings as to stupify his Senses with Fumes arising from a loaded Stomach, and to render them incapable to discharge their Functions through Intemperance and Excess. *Chrysostom* commends *Olympias* not more for the Modesty of her Garb, than the Meanness and Sobriety of her Diet, to which she had so used herself, that she had got the perfect Mastery over all undue Appetites and Inclinations, and had not only *bridled* the Horse, but *tamed* and reduced him to an entire Subjection, and taught her Stomach to receive only so much Meat and Drink as was enough to keep her alive, and in Health. This indeed was the great End of their signal Abstinence in those days, that by subduing the *Flesh* they might keep the stricter hand over the inordinate Motions of *corrupt Nature*. When *Celsus* accused the *Jews*, and in them obliquely the Christians, for needlessly abstaining from *Swines Flesh*, and some other sorts of Food, affirming this to be no such great Matter, when the *Pythagoreans* wholly abstained from eating any *living Creature*, who yet were never thought the better, or the more *dear* to God for it: *Origen* answers, that whatever Reason the *Jews* did it for,

Chap. 4.

Basil. Ep. 208. *tom.* 3. *p.* 225. *Confer. Socrat. lib.* 3. *c.* 13. *p.* 185.

Ep. 2. *ad Olymp. tom.* 4. *p.* 616.

Orig. cont. Cels. l. 5. *p.* 259, 264.

Part II. (God having appointed the Difference) this concerned not *Chriſtians*; that it is not *what enters in at the Mouth that defiles the Man, nor does Meat commend us to God*, nor do we think this Abſtinence any ſuch great matter; nor yet do we ſo indulge the Belly, as to affect or purſue ſuch Delights; that there's a vaſt Difference between *us* and the *Pythagoreans* in this Affair; they indeed abſtain upon the Account of their abſurd and fabulous Doctrine of the Soul's *Tranſmigration*, or paſſing out of one Body into another; and ſo forbear to kill or eat any living Creature, leſt haply they may deſtroy and devour their own *Friends* or *Children*: But we in all our Abſtinence do it only *to keep under the Body, and to bring it into Subjection*, endeavouring *to mortify the Deeds of the Body, to expel and extinguiſh our Members that are upon the Earth, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, inordinate Affection, and every evil Concupiſcence and Deſire.* Where he fully vindicates the Chriſtians in their Abſtemiouſneſs and Temperance, from doing it out of any vain and fooliſh Affectation, any nice and ſingular Opinion, any baſe and ſordid, moroſe or unſociable Temper: They were careful to keep the *Mean*, and to avoid *Sordidneſs* as well as *Luxury*; nor did they profeſs themſelves Enemies to the Proviſion of human Life, any further than as they were inconſiſtent with the Ends of Sobriety and Religion: As may appear from a *memorable* Paſſage related by *Euſebius*, out of a Letter of the Churches of *Lyons* and *Vien*, in *France*, to thoſe in *Aſia*. *Alcibiades* (one of thoſe who ſhortly after ſuffered Martyrdom) had accuſtomed himſelf to a very rigid and ſordid Kind of Life, rejecting all other Sorts of Food except only *Bread* and *Water*; and this he did both before and after he was in Priſon, which it ſeems had an ill Influence upon others: Whereupon *Attalus*,

Hiſt. Ecc. lib. 5. c. 3. p. 167.

talus, one of the most eminent of those famous Martyrs, the day after his being first exposed in the *Amphitheatre*, had it *revealed* to him (*For as yet*, says the Historian, *the Divine Grace had not withdrawn itself, but they had the Holy Spirit as their immediate Counsellor to instruct them*; which by the way may give Countenance to those frequent *Visions*, and *Divine Condescensions* which *Cyprian* speaks of in his Epistles: To this *Attalus* it was *revealed*) that *Alcibiades* did amiss in refusing to use the *Creatures* of God, and thereby giving a Scandal, and an Offence to others; upon which he laid aside his *Singularity*, and with all Thankfulness to God promiscuously eat any kind of Food. Chap. 4.

From the whole of what has been said, it's very evident, what little Reason the Heathens had to accuse the Christians (in their *Agapæ*, or Love-feasts, especially) of *Excess* and *Prodigality*; for that they did, *Tertullian* expressly affirms: Our *little Suppers* (*says he*) besides as being guilty of other Wickedness, they traduce as *prodigal*, saying of us as *Diogenes* did of the People of *Megara*, that they *supped* as if they meant to *die* to morrow. Nay, what were infinitely horrid and barbarous, they commonly charged them with *Thyestian* Suppers, and eating Man's Flesh. To the first Part of the Charge, concerning their Prodigality, *Tertullian* answers, That they could easilier *see a Mote in another's Eye, than a Beam in their own*; if they looked home, they would find that 'twas their own *Tribes* and *Precincts*, wherein the very Air was corrupted with the unsavory *Fumes* of their loaded Tables, and over-charged Stomachs; and yet all this was passed by, and only the poor Christians *Triclinium* called in question: That if they had any Feast, it was a *Love-feast*, and whatever Cost was laid out upon it, was expended not for *vain Glory*, but upon the Accounts of *Piety* and Religion; not

Apol. c. 39. p. 32. *Athenag. legat. pro Christian. p. 37.* *Ibid.*

to

Part II. to nouriſh *Paraſites* and Flatterers, but to refreſh the *Poor:* That the *Order* of the Feaſt was as *ſober* and regular as the *Cauſe* was honeſt, going no farther than Modeſty would admit: They *prayed* to God before they ventured upon his Creatures, eat but what ſufficed Hunger, drank no more than conſiſted with ſober and modeſt Men; and fed ſo, as remembring they were to riſe *at Night* to worſhip God. When they had done, they ſung *Pſalms*, either of their own *Compoſure*, or out of the *Holy Volumes*; and as they *began*, ſo they ended the Feaſt with Prayer, and then departed with the ſame Care to preſerve their Modeſty and Chaſtity; ſo that they appeared not ſo much to have *feaſted* at Supper, as to have *fed* upon Diſcipline and Order. *So he.* For the other Part of the Charge, their feeding upon *Man's Fleſh* at this common Supper, 'twas a Suggeſtion ſo *ſavage* and *barbarous*, as could have found Belief with nothing but the very Spirit of Malice; we ſhall again meet with this Objection in another Place, and ſhall therefore here only note out of their *Apologiſt*, that it was a Charge never offer'd to be made *good* againſt them, nor proved in any of thoſe many thouſand Trials which the Chriſtians had had in all Parts of the Empire; that it was very unlikely they ſhould be guilty of eating *Human* Fleſh, who did not think it lawful to be preſent at the *Gladiatory Sports*, where Men were *ſlain*, or ſo much as to *taſte* any *Blood* at all. So *Biblias* the Martyr told her Enemies, when being reproached with this in the midſt of her Torments, ſhe cried out, *How is it poſſible that we ſhould devour* Infants, *as you charge us, who think it not lawful ſo much as to taſte the Blood of any Creature?* For even till then, and a long time after, they obſerved that *Canon* of the *Apoſtolick* Council, *To abſtain from things ſtrangled, and from Blood.* So far were they from being either *barbarous* or *luxurious!* No, our

Athenag. 3. *Ibid. p.* 38.

Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl. ubi ſupr. p. 158. *Cap.* 1.

our Feasts (as he says in *Minutius Felix*) are not only *chaste*, but *sober*; we indulge not ourselves in Banquets, nor make our Feasts with Wine, but temper our Chearfulness with Gravity and Seriousness. And indeed their often Watchings and Fastings, and their constant Observance of the strictest Parts of Devotion, sufficiently shew'd how little they pamper'd or indulged the *Flesh*, the *Signs* whereof they every where carry'd in their very *Faces*; and this was so notorious, that their very Enemies reproached them with their *trembling* Joints, and their *pale* ghastly Looks. And *Lucian*, giving an Account of the *Christian* Assembly, into which he tells us *Critias* was brought to be made a *Proselyte*, describes them to be *a Company of Persons with their Heads hanging down and pale Faces*; which certainly did not arise from their Fear of Suffering, (for no Men in the World were ever so *willing*, nay, so desirous of laying down their Lives as they) but from their frequent *Abstinence* and *Fasting*. To which purpose S. *Basil*'s Comment is most apposite; where commending *Temperance*, or (as he calls it) *Continence*, using the Word in its largest Sense: Other Vertues (says he) being mainly exercised in *secret*, are not altogether so *visible* to the Eyes of Men; whereas Continence, where-ever it is, will at first Sight betray itself. For as a good Complexion, and an excellent Constitution of Body, peculiarly design a Man to be an *Athletes*, or Champion; so, Leanness of Body, and that *Paleness*, which is the Fruit of Continence, evidence a Christian to be a real *Champion* for the Commands of *Christ*, vanquishing his Enemy in the Weakness of his Body, and shews how able he is to *contend* in the Cause of Piety and Vertue. The very Sight of such a Man must needs be of great Advantage to affect us, to behold him sparingly and moderately using even those things that are necessary, not paying Nature its *Tribute*,

Chap. 4.

Min. Fel. p. 26.

Pallidi, trepidi. Apud eundem, p. 10.

Philopatr. tom. 2. p. 1007.

Reg. Suf. disp. interrog. 17. p. 559.

Part II. *Tribute*, without ſome Regret, begrudging the little Time that he ſpends about it, and therefore making Haſte to get from the Table to return to his better Exerciſes and Employments.

CHAP. V.

Of their Singular *Continence* and *Chaſtity*.

Their admirable Continence diſcover'd in ſeveral Particulars. Their Abſtinence from Marriage. Their Marrying only to comply with the End of the Inſtitution. Seldom marry'd more than once. Their Continence admired by Heathens. The Fathers generally ſevere againſt ſecond Marriages. The moderate Judgment of Clemens Alexandrinus *in the Caſe. The Canons of ſeveral Councils concerning it. Three ſorts of Digamy or ſecond Marriages. Their ſhunning all Occaſions and Appearances of Lightneſs and Immodeſty, abſtaining from Publick Meetings, Feaſts, Plays, &c.* Conſtantine's *Law, that no Widow ſhould be forced to appear at publick Tribunals. Another of* Theodoſius, *that none ſhould marry within twelve complete Months after her Husband's Deceaſe. The promiſcuous Uſe of Baths forbidden both by Canon and Civil Laws. Unmarry'd Perſons, eſpecially of Eccleſiaſtick Relation, not familiarly to converſe together.* Mulieres Συνείσακτοι, *who. How brought in. Condemned by the Council of* Antioch, *and that of* Nice. *Clandeſtine Marriages diſallow'd. Their abhorring all immodeſt Pictures and Diſcourſes. The great Modeſty*

Modesty of Gorgonia. *Their valuing Chastity above Life; submitting to any kind of Death rather than violate it; many choosing to kill themselves rather than be deflower'd. Several Instances of it. Impurity in Christians bewailed as a great Scandal; punish'd by the Church with very severe Penalties. Several Passages out of the Fathers and Councils noted to that purpose. Christians accused by the Heathens of Incest and Adultery. The Sum of the Charge. Their Answer. The Heathens very unfit to bring in this Charge, being themselves so notoriously guilty; whole Nations, their wisest Philosophers, their very Gods themselves; This fully proved against them. The very Gentiles tacitly confessed the Christians innocent, by condemning them to be forcibly prostituted. A Part of their Religion not to give way to wanton Looks or unchaste Desires. The eminent Prevalency of Christianity in converting Persons from Uncleanness and Debauchery, pleaded and asserted. The Original of the Accusation enquired into. Found to arise from the beastly Practices of the Gnosticks, &c. who tho' guilty of the most notorious Villanies, and of these in particular, yet shrowded themselves under the general Name of Christians. Some forced thro' Fear to confess the Christians guilty of these Crimes.*

Chap. 5.

A Third considerable Instance of that Sobriety and Moderation for which the Christians were so renowned of old, was their **Continence**, in abstaining from all manner of Uncleanness; which is that

Part II. that Vertue that we properly call *Chaſtity*; a Vertue for which how eminent they were, (notwithſtanding what their Enemies heavily charged upon them to the contrary, of which afterwards) we ſhall take Notice of in ſome few Particulars.

Firſt, The Chriſtians of thoſe Times were ſo far from breaking in upon any *unchaſte* Embraces, that they frequently abſtained even from *lawful* Pleaſures, and kept themſelves even from the *honourable* and *undefiled* Bed, never marrying all their Life.

Min. Fel. p. 26. We are (ſays *Octavius*) *chaſte* in our *Speech*, and *chaſter* in our *Bodies*; and very many of us, tho' we do not boaſt on't, do inviolably preſerve a *perpetual* Virginity; and are ſo far from any extravagant Deſire after *inceſtuous* Mixtures, that many ſtand at a Diſtance from the moſt *chaſte* and modeſt Em-

Ap. 2. p. 62. braces. Thus *Juſtin Martyr* tells the Emperors, that amongſt the *Chriſtians* there were a great many of either Sex, who had from their Childhood been educated in the Chriſtian Diſcipline, who for 60 or 70 Years had kept themſelves *ſingle* and uncorrupt; and he wiſhed the like could be ſhewn in

Athan. leg. pro Chriſt. p. 37. all other ſorts of Men. To the ſame purpoſe another *Apologiſt*: 'Tis very eaſy (ſays he) to find many amongſt us both Men and Women, who remain unmarry'd even in *old Age*; conceiving that in this State they ſhall have fitter Opportunities of drawing near to God. Not that they who perſevered in this Courſe of *Celibate*, did combine themſelves into diſtinct Societies, and bind themſelves under an *Oath* of *perpetual* Virginity, (as the Humour was in after-ages) for of this not the leaſt Shadow appears in any of the Writings of thoſe times: They lived promiſcuouſly 'till towards the End of the third *Century*, apply'd themſelves to the Buſineſs of their Place and Station, and only lived ſingle, that in thoſe troubleſome and hazardous Times of Perſecution, they might be leſs enſnared with the Entanglements

tanglements of the World, and be more free for the Exerciſes of Religion. Chap. 5.

Secondly, When they did marry, they generally profeſſed they did it only to comply with the great End of the *Inſtitution*, *viz.* the Propagation of Mankind; not to gratify wanton and brutiſh Deſires, but to anſwer the great *End* of Nature, that Human Society might not fail: Either (ſay they) we marry not at all, but keep ourſelves *always* continent; or if we do marry, it is for no other End but the bringing forth and the bringing up of Children. Whoever amongſt us takes a Wife according to the Laws preſcribed us, he reckons he does it only for the Begetting of Children: Within this his Deſires are bounded and limited; as the Huſbandman concerns himſelf no further in tilling his Ground, and ſowing of his Corn, than to bring forth the Crop at Harveſt. Hence it was, that they ſeldom marry'd more than *once*: We willingly contain ourſelves (as he ſpeaks in *M. Felix*) within the Bounds of ſingle Marriage, and either know but *one* Woman, (and that merely out of a Deſire of Children) or *none*. The firſt Knot being looſed by Death, they very rarely tied a ſecond: Which gained great Honour and Reputation both to them and to their Religion with the *Gentiles*, amongſt whom they lived. *Chryſoſtom* tells us, That a Diſcourſe happening on a time between him and his Maſter, who was a *Gentile*, concerning his *Mother*, being told that ſhe was a Widow, and after enquiry concerning her Age, being anſwer'd that ſhe was 40 Years old, and that ſhe had lived 20 Years of the time a Widow; the Man was ſurprized with a ſtrange Admiration, and cried out before all the Company, *Behold* (ſaid he) *what brave Women there are amongſt the Chriſtians!* The Truth is, ſuch was the Heavenly Zeal and Temper of the firſt Ages of *Chriſtianity*, that they would have no more to do with

Juſt. Mart. ib. 71. *Athenag. ibid.*

Ubi ſupra.

Ad vid. junior. tom. 4. *p.* 458.

Part II. with the World than they needs must, but industriously shunn'd all its Burdens and Incumbrances, amongst which they especially reckon'd Marriage, a State not rashly to be engaged in; for once it was *allowable*, but for a second time *inexcusable*. And indeed it cannot be deny'd, but that many of the ancient Fathers, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, *Hierom*, and others, did inveigh against *second Marriages* with too much Bitterness and Severity, violently pressing many Passages in Scripture to serve the Cause, straining the String many times till it cracked again; and not sticking to censure and condemn second Marriages, as little better than *Adultery*. Hear what one of the *Apologists* says to it: Amongst us every Man either remains as he was born, or engages himself in one only Marriage: For as for second Marriages, they are but a more plausible and *decorous* kind of Adultery; our Lord assuring us, That *whoever puts away his Wife, and takes another, commits Adultery*. Which Place, as also another of like Importance, how perversly he interprets, and impertinently applies to his purpose, I am not willing to remember. *Clemens Alexandrinus* speaks in the Case with much more *Modesty* and Moderation: As for those to whom God has given the Gift of *absolute* Continence, we think them happy; we admire the Gravity and Staidness of those that content themselves with a single Marriage; but yet say withal, that Compassion ought to be had of others, and that we *should bear one another's Burdens*, lest he who *seems to stand fair, do fall himself*. And as for second Marriages, that of the Apostle is to take place, *if they cannot contain, they should marry; for it is better to marry than to burn*. However, 'tis certain, the Fathers of old generally did what they could to discourage second Marriages. The ancient *Canons* (as *Zonaras* tells us) suspended such Persons from the Communion for a whole Year; and the Council of *Laodicea*,

Athenag. ut supra.

Strom. l. 3. p. 428.

Vid. Epiph. Hær. 48. p. 178.

Cyril. ad illum. Catech. 4. p. 90.

De Can. 7. Conc. Neo. Cæsar. Can. 1.

Laodicea, tho' it determine not the Time, yet it requires that they ſhould ſpend ſome ſmall time at leaſt in *Penance*, in Faſting and Prayer, before they be received to the Communion. By the *Canons* that are call'd *Apoſtolical*, whoever, after Baptiſm, has engaged in a ſecond Marriage, is rendred incapable of any Degree in the Miniſtry. Accordingly *Epiphanius* reports of one *Joſeph*, whom he knew, a converted *Jew*, and advanced to the Dignity of a *Count* by *Conſtantine* the Great; that when the *Arians* would have laid Hands upon him to have made him Biſhop, he got off by this Wile, by pretending himſelf to have been twice married. But tho' the Fathers and ancient Councils were thus ſevere in this Caſe, yet the Rigour of their Cenſure will be much abated, if what ſome tell us be true, That many of their Paſſages are not level'd againſt ſucceſſive Marriages, but againſt having two Wives at the ſame time. For, as a learned Man hath obſerved, there were three ſorts of *Digamy*; the firſt a Man's having two Wives *at once*; this was condemned by the *Roman* Laws. The ſecond, when the former Wife being dead, the Man marry'd a *ſecond time*. A third, when for any ſlight Cauſe a Man *put away* his Wife by a Bill of *Divorce*, and marry'd another; which tho' then frequently practiſed and connived at (if not allowed) by the Laws of thoſe Times, was yet prohibited by the Decrees of the Church; and of this laſt ſort (ſays he) many of the ancient Canons are to be underſtood.

Chap. 5.

Can. 17.

Hæreſ. 30. *p.* 61.

Fuſtell. not. in Can. 1. *Conc. Laod.*

Thirdly, They were infinitely careful to ſhun all *Occaſions* and Appearances of Lightneſs and Immodeſty, whatever might tend to inveigle their Senſes, and to debauch their Minds and Manners; nay, whatever might but give a Suſpicion of Wantonneſs and Incontinence. They declined, as much as might be, going to all publick Meetings; ſuch

Part II. as Feasts, Plays, Shews, &c. Therefore *Cyprian* severely chides some *Virgins* for being present at *Weddings*, where they laughed freely, could not but hear loose Discourses, see uncomely Carriages, feed upon luxurious Dishes; all which must needs not only *kindle*, but add *Fuel* to the *Fire*, and fill their Minds with indecent Thoughts and Desires. S. *Hierom*, on the other hand, does as much commend some whom he knew, who always kept at home on *Festival*-days, to avoid the Crowd and Gazes of the People; and would never go abroad at those times when they could not venture into the Publick, without the greatest Care and Custody of themselves. For this Reason *Constantine* made a Law, That *Matrons* should not be forced, upon the Account of Debt, to come out of their own Houses, to appear before the publick *Tribunals*; but that the Business should be decided in such way, as might not betray the Modesty of that Sex. And when afterwards the Fervor of Christianity began to abate apace, and Persons had in a great measure lost that huge Reverence which former Times had for Continence and Chastity; *Theodosius*, to restrain them a little within the Bounds of Decency, provided a Law, That *no Woman*, of what Quality or Rank soever, should *marry* again within a Year at least, (*i. e.* within twelve *full* Months, whereas under the old *Roman* Laws, the Time of Mourning was but Ten, as a Learned *Interpreter* of that Law observes) after her Husband's Death; and this he ratify'd by a double Penalty; a Note of perpetual *Infamy* to be set upon the offending Person, and the Loss of her whole *Dower*, and whatever Estate her Husband had bequeathed her; which was to go to the Children she had by him, or (if none) to his next of Kin. By the *Laodicean* Council, not only Clergymen, and such as have entred upon a State of Continency, but

De Discipl. & Hab. Virg. p. 167.

De Virg. servand. p. 71. *tom.* 1.

Cod. Theod. l. 1. *tit.* 10. *l.* 1.

Ib. l. 3. *tit.* 8. *l.* 1. *Vid. Gothofred. in loc.*

Can. 30. *Vid. Conc. in Trull. Can.* 77.

but all Christian Men whatsoever, are forbidden to use the same *common Baths* with Women: And for very good Reason, it being a Thing (as *Zonaras* observes) both *shameful* and uncomely in itself, and pernicious in its Consequence: For how easily does an unlawful *Flame* kindle from such a *Spark?* And when Human Nature is of itself so ready to *boil* over, who would pour *Oil* upon the *Fire?* A thing ever look'd upon as repugnant to all the Laws of Modesty, yea, even by them that *are without*; this being (says the *Council*) one of the chiefest Things which the very Heathen *condemn*, and for which they censure and reproach us. Parallel to this, *Photius* and his Commentator *Balsamon* tell us of a Law of the Emperor *Justinian*, making it a sufficient Cause of *Divorce*, and losing her *Dowry*, for a Woman either to *feast* or *bathe* in the Company of other Men, without the Leave and Consent of her Husband. Indeed in the first and purer Times, they took all imaginable Care that unmarry'd Persons, especially such as were of *Ecclesiastical* Cognizance, or had devoted themselves to a severer Course of Piety, should not commonly converse together. *Cyprian* writing to *Pomponius* about the Virgins that had taken Profession of Continence upon them, but lived too familiarly with some Persons that belonged unto the Church, charges him, that Men and Virgins should not only not *sleep* near one another, but not dwell together in the same House; lest the Infirmity of their Sex, and the Slipperiness of their Youth should betray them into *the Snare of the Devil.* Wherefore he commends *Pomponius* for having suspended the *Deacon*, and the rest that had kept such familiar Correspondence with those Virgins; and order'd that they should not be absolved till they had sufficiently testify'd their Repentance, and made it appear by satisfactory Evidence, that no

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Nomocan. τίτλ. ϑ'. κεφ. λα'. *p.* 104.

Ep. 62. *p.* 98. *Videsis Conc.* 1. *Carthag. Can.* 3, 4.

Part II. unlawful Familiarity had passed between them; and that if ever they returned to the like Cohabitation, greater Penalties should be inflicted upon them. The Foundation of which ill Custom doubtless sprung, or at least took Encouragement from hence: In those first Times of Christianity it was usual for *Clergymen*, such especially as were sent up and down to preach the Gospel, to have some grave and sober *Woman* along with them; who might be helpful and assisting to them, and who was neither *Wife* nor *Concubine*, but taken in either upon the Account of necessary *Attendance*, or the Pretence of *Piety*. These Women in the Writings of the Church (wherein there is frequent mention of them) are called Συνείσακτοι, such as were brought in, taken into the House as *Domestick* Assistants to *Ecclesiastick* Persons. But this proving matter of Scandal and Inconvenience, was not only cried out against by *private* Fathers, but by *publick* Synods. The Council of *Antioch* held in the Reign of *Aurelian* the Emperor, *Anno* 272, in a *Synodical* Epistle, wherein they censure the Doctrines and Practices of *Paulus Samosatenus*; condemn this among the rest, that he and his *Presbyters* and *Deacons* keep these *introduced Women*, whereby horrible Inconveniences did arise; for besides the Snare and Temptation of it, although they should keep themselves innocent, yet they could not avoid the Suspicion and Scandal that would arise, and the Danger of drawing in others by their bad Example. For which reason S. *Basil* writes to an old *Presbyter* in his Dioceſs, to abstain from the Company of a Woman, with whom he was wont to *cohabit*; not so much to avoid Temptation to Incontinence (the Man being then 70 Years of Age) as that he may not lay a Stumbling-stone, and Occasion of *Offence* in his Brother's way. The same was universally forbidden by the great Council of *Nice*, and no Man

Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 7. c. 30. p. 281.

Epiſt. ad Paregor. Presbyt. Ep. 198. p. 216.

Can. 3. ubi vid. Zonar.

Man within the Clergy allow'd to have any Woman near him, unless his *Mother*, his *Sister*, or his *Aunt*, or such only of whom there could be no *Suspicion*; as we find it in the third *Canon* of that Council; in the ancient Version whereof these *mulieres* Συνείσακτοι are styled *Extraneæ, Strangers*; by which Name they are also called in a Law of the Emperor *Honorius*, prohibiting any Clergyman whatsoever, to keep Company with these *strange Women*; limiting their Converse and Cohabitation within the very same Relations to which they are restrained by the *Nicene Canon*, which 'tis not to be doubted that the Emperor had in his Eye when he made that *Constitution*. And because *Bishops* were the highest Order in the Church, therefore that their Honour might be especially secured, Care was taken, that no Bishop, under Penalty of being *deposed*, should entertain, or cohabit with any *Woman* whatsoever, either Relation or Stranger, that so all Pretence either of Temptation or Scandal, might be cut off. For the same Reason it was, that they disallow'd all *Clandestine* Marriages which were not openly made in the Face of the Church, accounting them no better than a State of *Adultery* or *Fornication*. And as they were careful not to give Offence to others, so they were not willing themselves to come within the Shadow of a Temptation: They stood at a Distance from whatever was offensive either to their *Eyes* or *Ears*; their *Ears* they stopt against all loose idle Songs, all filthy and obscene Discourses; their *Eyes* they shut against all uncomely Objects, all wanton and lascivious Pictures, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* expressly tells us, not doing any thing that seemed but to carry an ill Colour with it. *Nazianzen* tells us of his Sister *Gorgonia*, a vertuous Woman, whose Example we have often quoted, That for Modesty and Sobriety she went beyond all other Women;

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C. Th. lib. 16. Tit. 2. de Episc. l. 44.

Synop. Basil. lib. Tit. 1. c. 41. p. 22.

Tertull. de pudicit. c. 4. p. 557.

Admonit. ad Græc. p. 40. vid. Conc. 6. in Trul. Can. 100. Orat. 11. p. 180.

Part II. that she reconciled the two opposite States of Human Life, *Celibate* and *Marriage*; the one more *sublime* and *divine*, but more *dangerous* and *troublesome*; the other more *humble*, but withal more *safe*; that she avoided the Inconveniences of each, and chose what was most excellent out of both, the *Sublimity* of the one, and the *Security* of the other; shewing, that neither of these States, in itself, did wholly tie us up either to God or the World, nor yet wholly separate us from them; so that the one should be absolutely rejected, or the other absolutely commended and embraced; but that it is the *Mind* that admirably presides both over Mar-
Ib. p. 185. riage and Virginity. And withal, farther adds concerning her, That so great was her *Bashfulness* and Modesty, that when she lay under a most acute and dangerous Distemper, yet she refused to have any *Physician* come near her; as blushing that any Man should either *see* or touch her.

Fourthly, They valued their Innocency and their Honour above their *Lives*, and therefore chose to undergo the greatest Dangers; to *die*, yea, to *kill* themselves rather than any Violence should be offer'd to their Chastity. As the fairest Promises could not *tempt* them, so neither could the fiercest Torments *affright* them into any unchaste Compli-
Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. 8. c. 14. p. 312. ance. When *Maximinus*, the *Emperor*, govern'd in the *Eastern* Parts, amongst other Effects of his wild and brutish Fury and Extravagance, he fill'd all Places where he came with Adulteries and Ravishments, abusing Women, and deflouring Virgins; which succeeded well enough (says the *Historian*) with all others, except only *Christians*, who generously despising Death, made light of the Rage and Fury of the Tyrant. The Men underwent all sorts of Punishments which Cruelty could invent; the Women bore up with a Courage, no less *manly* and unconquerable; and when any were

drawn

drawn out to be abuſed, they rather ſubmitted their Lives to Death, than their Bodies to *Diſhonour*. Of theſe he tells us of one eſpecially at *Alexandria*, a Woman of great Birth and Fortune, but much more famous for her Vertues, eſpecially her Modeſty and Chaſtity; which ſhe ſtoutly defended, and preferr'd before her Nobility, or her Riches, her excellent Parts, or any Accompliſhments whatſoever. The Emperor had oft attempted her by all Arts of Solicitation; but all in vain, till at laſt, not being able to prevail, his Affection ſomewhat attempering his Fierceneſs and Cruelty, he would not put her to Death, which ſhe was moſt ready to have undergone; but ſpoil'd her of her Eſtate, and then ſent her into Baniſhment; there being many hundreds of others at the ſame time, who not able to bear the Violation of their Chaſtity, wherewith the Governors and Commanders threatned them, willingly ſubjected themſelves to all kinds of Racks and Tortures, and the worſt *capital* Puniſhments which their Enemies could inflict upon them. Nay, when the Caſe ſo happen'd that they were ſet upon, and all their Reſoluteneſs could not provoke the cruel Kindneſs of their Enemies to diſpatch them, they would rather diſpatch *themſelves*, than fall into the rude Hands of Luſt and Wantonneſs. Thus did that famous *Woman*, and her two Daughters, (mention'd by the ſame Author, whoſe Names, as *Chryſoſtom* in an *Oration* on purpoſe in their Commendation tells us, were *Domnina* the Mother, *Bernice* and *Proſdoce* the Daughters) eminent as well for the outward Beauty and *Features* of their Bodies, as for the inward *Vertues* of their Minds, being ſought for as a Prey to Luſt, under the *Diocleſian* Perſecution, they fled for it; but being found out by the Soldiers that were ſent to ſearch for them, and knowing there was no other way to

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Ib. c. 12. *p.* 305. *Hom.* 51. *de S. S. Domn. Ber. Proſd. tom.* 1. *p.* 557.

Part II. escape; in their Return, they begg'd Leave of the Soldiers, that for some private Occasions they might step a little out of the Road; which being granted, fitting themselves for what they had before-hand agreed on, as well as the Time would give them Leave, they unanimously threw themselves into the River, and there perish'd in the *Waters*. The like he relates of a noble *Woman* at *Rome*, Wife to the *Prefect*, or chief Governor of the City, (but a Christian) that *Maxentius* the Emperor being passionately inflamed with the Love of her, sent Officers to fetch her, who breaking into the House, to the great Terror of her Husband, would violently have seiz'd on her; of whom she begg'd only so much Time as that she might a little dress and adorn herself; under which Pretence, retiring into her Chamber, she caught up a Sword, and by a fatal Stroke, left the Messengers nothing but a dismal Spectacle of Amazement and Horror. These Instances (both of them highly applauded by *Chrysostom* and *Eusebius*) I quote not to justify a Man's laying violent Hands upon himself, as either lawful or laudable; whether in some such Cases, Persons might not be acted by some *divine* Motions, extraordinary and *heroick* Impulses (the Case of *Sampson*, &c.) as S. *Austin* inclines to believe, it is not very pertinent for me to enquire; it being enough to my purpose to observe, that they were great Evidences how highly they prized *Chastity* and *Integrity*, which they were willing to secure at so dear a Rate.

Ibid. c. 14 p. 313.

De Civ. D. lib. 1. c. 26. col. 75. ubi de hac ipsa re agit.

And in those Cases wherein Life was not concern'd, they gave the greatest Testimony how much they abhorr'd all Uncleanness. None were ever more hearty Enemies to *Idolatry*; and yet *Origen* at *Alexandria* (if that Story be true) when put to this unhappy Choice, either to *sacrifice* or *defile* himself, chose rather to commit Idolatry than Fornication. Tho' even that too was rather his *Enemies* Act than his

Epiphan. Haves. 64. p. 228.

his own, they thrusting the Frankincense into his Hand, and haling him up to the *Altar*. Chap. 5.

Fifthly, Whenever any was found guilty of the least Uncleanness, it was looked upon and *bewailed* as a very *heinous* Sin, and a great *Dishonour* to the Christian Name: What is it that I hear (says *Cyprian*) how detestable should it be to you, what with the greatest Grief and Affliction of my Mind I have understood, that there are some amongst you who have defiled their *Bodies*, the *Temples of God*, even after they were *sanctified* by Confession, and *cleansed* by Baptism, with filthy and infamous Embraces, promiscuously using the Beds and Lodgings of the Women? When although they should be free from *actual* Adultery, yet even in this 'twould be a *Fault* of a mighty Aggravation, that by their *scandalous* Example others might be seduced into Ruin. S. *Basil*, writing to a *Monk* who had been *overtaken* with this *Fault*, elegantly bewails the Greatness of his Sin, as a Dishonour to the Strictness of his former Profession; a Reproach to those Lips, which had *kissed* the Mouths of so many *Saints*; to those Hands, which so many devout Persons had *embraced* as pure and undefiled; to those Knees, before which so many Servants of God had *fallen down*; as a being caught in the Snare of a crafty *Devil*, a perfidious Violation of his *Promises*, a being become a *Sport* and Scorn to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, a confuting (what in him lay) that triumphant Speech of *Christ*, that he had *overcome the World*, filling even to the Place where he lived a Cup of *Infamy* and *Reproach*. In the next Epistle he deals with the *Woman*, and treats her with the same elegant Severity, tho' in both he so aggravates the Case, as to excite them to Repentance, and to a speedy *Recovery of themselves out of the Snare of the Devil*. But because good Words and Persuasions were not *Cords* strong enough to restrain some Mens irregular

Ad Rogat. & Confess. Ep. 6. p. 15.

Ad Monach. lap. tom. 1. p. 11.

Part II. regular Lusts and Passions, they twisted with them the *Discipline* of the Church: And therefore,

Sixthly, They were wont to *punish* the Breach of Chastity by inflicting severe Penalties upon incontinent Persons. Amongst all the Sins that were most sharply punished in the ancient Church, *Adultery* was one of the chief: Whosoever was convicted of it, was immediately cast out of the Church, and disowned as a rotten Member. This, *Tertullian* tells us, first made *Marcion* turn *Heretick*; for being found guilty of lying with a Virgin, and for that thrown out of the Communion of the Church, he betook himself to one *Cerdon*, a *Master-Heretick*, and espoused his Doctrines and Opinions. The Truth is, in those first Times the Punishment of Adultery was very great, *perpetual* Penance all a Man's Life, and scarce being admitted into Communion at the very *Hour of Death*, till Pope *Zephyrinus*, about the Year *two hundred and sixteen*, considering the great Inconveniences of so much Severity, Persons hereby being oft *driven* into *Despair*, and others discouraged from coming over to the Christian Faith, ordered, That Penance in this Case should be limited to a shorter time; which being ended, such Persons might be received again into the Bosom of the *Church*. This *Decree* gave great Offence to the *African* Churches, most whereof stood up for the Strictness of the *ancient* Discipline. *Tertullian* more especially inveighs against it with much Bitterness and Animosity, as a thing *unfit* in itself, and an *Innovation* in the Church. The same *Cyprian* also plainly intimates, tho' he himself was for the more *mild* Opinion. By the *Ancyran* Council, held *Anno* three hundred and fifteen, it was decreed, That whoever was guilty of Adultery, should be punished with a *seven Years* Penance before they were admitted to the Communion. By the Synod of *Illiberis*, if a Man, after having done his

Vid. Tert. de Pudicit. c. 7. p. 560. de Hæres. p. 120.

Lib. de Pudicit. c. 1. p. 555. Ad Antonian. Ep. 52. p. 71, 72. Can. 20.

Can. 7. p. 13.

his Penance for the first Fault, fell afterwards into the same Sin again, he was not to be taken into Communion, no, *not* at the Hour of Death. The same Punishment they inflicted upon *Bawds*, and such Persons as for Gain prostituted the Bodies of their *Children*, by selling them (or themselves rather, of whom their Children were a Part) to Lust and Ruin. S. *Basil*, writing to *Amphilochius* Rules for the Conduct of Discipline, and the Measures of Repentance, sets Adultery at *fifteen Years* Penance, Fornication at *seven*, and then to be admitted to the Holy Sacrament. His Brother *Gregory*, Bishop of *Nyssa*, treating about the same Affairs, appoints Fornication to be punished with no less than *nine Years* Penance, and Suspension from the Sacrament; and Adultery, and all other Species of Uncleanness, with double that Time: Though allowing Liberty to the *Spiritual Guide* to contract this Time, as the Circumstances of the *Case* or *Person* might require. But both these last mentioned being but private Bishops, their *Canons* could be no further obligatory, than to those particular *Dioceses*, that were under their Charge. And indeed the Censures of the Church in this Case did much vary according to Time and Place, in some more *rigid* and *severe*, in others more *lax* and favourable; tho' in all, such as did abundantly shew what hearty Enemies they were to all Filthiness and Impurity whatsoever.

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Can. 12. p. 22.

Epist. Can. 58, 59. *tom.* 3. *p.* 36.

Ep. Can. ad Letoi. Can. 4. *tom.* 1. *p.* 951.

What has been hitherto said of the Modesty, the chaste and sober Carriage of the *Primitive Christians*, will receive further Light, if we consider how clearly they vindicated themselves from that *malicious* Charge of *Incest* and *Adultery*, which the Heathens commonly charged upon them; so commonly, that we scarce find any of the ancient *Apologists* but takes Notice of it, and confutes it. The Sum of the Charge, as 'tis more formally drawn up by the Heathen

Part. II. Heathen in *M. Fælix*, take thus: That the Christians knew one another by certain *privy* Marks and Signs, and were wont to be in *love* with, almoſt before they *knew* one another; that they exerciſed Luſt and Filthineſs under a Pretence of Religion, promiſcuouſly calling themſelves *Brothers* and *Siſters*, that by the Help of ſo *ſacred* a Name, their common Adulteries might become *inceſtuous:* That upon a ſolemn Day, they meet together at a Feaſt [*he means their Love-Feaſts*] with their *Wives*, *Children*, *Siſters*, *Mothers*, Perſons of every *Age* and *Sex*; where, after they have well eaten and drank, and begun to be *warm* and merry, heated with the Exceſs of Wine, a Piece of *Meat* is thrown for the *Dogs*, who being tied to the *Candleſticks*, begin to leap and friſk about, till they have run away with, and put out the *Lights*; and then nothing being left but Darkneſs, the fit *Cover* and Shadow for Impudence and Villany, they promiſcuouſly run amongſt one another into filthy and inceſtuous Embraces; and if they be not *all alike* guilty of Inceſt, 'tis not the Fault of their *Will*, but the good Fortune of their *Chance*, ſeeing what actually happens to one, is *intentionally* the Lot of all. This is the Tale, which however abſurd and incredible, yet ſtrangely found *Belief*, or at leaſt was pretended to be believed amongſt the Enemies of *Chriſtianity*. Now, though it be ſufficiently refuted by what has been already ſaid, yet we may obſerve the Chriſtians of thoſe Times further pleading theſe *Four* things in their own Vindication.

Pag. 7, 8.

Firſt, That if the Charge had been true, yet the *Heathens* had little reaſon to object it to the *Chriſtians*, being *themſelves* ſo notoriouſly guilty in this kind. For Adultery, nothing more common amongſt them; and for Inceſt, 'twas a general Indictment of *whole* Nations, the *Perſians* uſually lying with their own *Mothers*, the *Macedonians* and *Egyptians* mar-

Tert. Apol. c. 9. *p.* 10. *c.* 39. *p.* 31. *Min. Fæl. p.* 26.

marrying with their own *Sisters*, and this done even at *Athens* itself; their Histories full of them, their Plays and Tragedies, which they frequented every day with great Applause, represented them as *lawful* and *commendable*. *Socrates* himself, the great Glory of the Heathen World, was condemned at *Athens*, among other things, for *Sodomy*, and the Corruption of Youth; and some of *Plato*'s School have perished in the very *Act* of Adultery. Nay, their very Gods themselves, whom they worshipped and adored, were highly guilty in this kind. They feign those things of us (says *Athenagoras*) which they themselves report of their own Gods; whose Lusts and Wantonnesses 'tis no wonder if they style *Mysteries*: Were they such hearty Enemies to shameful and promiscuous Mixtures, they must abhor their great God *Jupiter*, who begot Children both of *Rhea* the *Mother*, and *Proserpina* the *Daughter*, and marry'd with his own *Sister*; and who was (unless *Orpheus* their great *Poet* lyes) more wicked and vile in his kind, than *Thyestes* himself? *Clemens Alexandrinus* tells them, That as they had order'd the matter, by the *Marriages*, begetting *Children*, *Adulteries*, and *Banquets* of their *Gods*, (which they set out in their *Plays* and *Poems*) they had turned Heaven into a *Comick Scene*, and made the *Deity* a Piece of *Dramatick* Sport, and by Satyrick Wit had jested *Religion*, and whatever was most *Sacred*, into *Scorn* and *Laughter*. Nothing more usual amongst them (as he there *observes*) than to hang their Rooms with the *Pictures* of their Gods drawn in the most lascivious and *propudious* Postures, engaged in the most filthy and dishonest Actions, enough to shame Intemperance itself. *These* (says he) *are the Original Patterns of your soft Effeminacy; this your beastly and shameful Divinity; these the Doctrines of your Gods, Copartners with you in your Uncleanness and Adultery.* And whereas they might pretend, that these Stories of their Gods were only

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Tert. ib. c. 46. p. 36.

Legat. pro Christian. p. 35.

Admonit. ad Græc. p. 39, 40.

Videsis Jul. Firm. de Err. Prof. Relig. p. 8.

Part II. ly the Extravagant Inventions of their *Poets*, who took a Liberty to say any thing to gratify the People; *Athanasius* answers, That hereby they shook the very *Foundation* of their *Gods*, having no other Authority for their *Existence*, than what Account their *Poets* gave them; so that if they feigned their *Actions*, they might with equal Reason be supposed to feign their very *Names* and *Persons*; there being the same ground of Belief for the one as for the other; and that there was as much Reason to believe they spake Truth in this, as in the Relation of any other Matters of Fact, concerning *Achilles*, *Ulysses*, *Nestor*, *Hector*, or any of the rest; all depending upon the same Warrant and Authority. This propagated Looseness and Uncleanness to them, under the Notion and Shadow of Religion; such as the *Gods* are, such warrantably may be their *Worshippers*. Wherever you are (says *Tertullian*) at home, or abroad, or beyond the Seas, *Lust* is your Companion, which often stumbles upon *Incest*; whereas Chastity, diligently and faithfully preserved, keeps us from any such Event, and we are as far from *Incest*, as we are from *Whoredom*, or any Excess in a married State; yea, many prevent all Possibility of this Charge, by containing themselves within perpetual Virginity. And yet though we are thus, (says another *Apologist*) yet there want not those who object these things to us; and as 'tis in the Proverb, ἡ πόρνη τὴν σώφρονα, *The Strumpet reproaches the honest Woman*; for though they *merchandize* for Lust, and keep open Shop for all manner of Uncleanness, not abstaining from the Violation and Abuse of *Youth*, Males with Males *committing that which is unseemly*; though themselves are guilty of these Villanies, which they report also of their *Gods*, and do themselves boast of them as brave *Achievements*; yet have they the Face to accuse us of them. *Adulterers* and *Sodomites* as they are, they charge

Orat. cont. Gent. p. 14. tom. 1.

Ibid. c. 9. p. 10.

Athenag. ut supr. p. 37.

charge us, who are either always continent, or never marry more than once; themselves in the mean while living like *Fishes, where the great ones subdue and swallow up the less.* Such infamous Filthinesses are done amongst you, which we do not care to *hear*, and may much less defend; you laying things to the Charge of chaste and modest Men, which we could not believe that there should be such things done in the World, were not you yourselves *Instances* of them. This Consideration made *Justin Martyr* thus freely and passionately bespeak the *Senate:* It were to be wished that some body getting up into a *high* Place, should with a *loud* Voice cry out, *Be afraid, be afraid to charge those things of which you yourselves are openly guilty, upon the Innocent and Undeserving; to attribute what belongs only to yourselves, and to your Gods, to those with whom there is not so much as the Shadow of any such thing to be found. Learn to be more wise and sober, and repent of such Injustice.*

Chap. 5.

M. Fœl. p. 24. B.

Ap. 1. p. 51.

Secondly, That the Heathens themselves did tacitly *confess* Christians to be *innocent* in this Case, when their great Care was how they might *debauch* them: 'Twas a Part of their severest Punishment to be *prostituted*, and exposed to Rudeness and Violence; a Penalty which they would never have inflicted upon them, had they really been such *lewd* profligate Persons as their Enemies endeavoured to represent them. This Plea *Tertullian* urges in the Close of his *Apology:* Condemn, (says he) crucify and torment us; your *Cruelty* and Injustice is the Evidence of our *Innocency*, and therefore God suffers it to come upon us: For while you choose rather to condemn a *Woman* that is a *Christian* to the *Stews* than to the *Lions*, you plainly confess, that the Violation of Chastity is accounted by us a *heavier* Penalty, than any Punishment or kind of Death which you can inflict upon us.

C. ult. p. 40.

Ad Lenonem quàm ad Leonem.

An

Part II.

An eminent Instance hereof (tho' of the other Sex) S. *Hierom* relates to this Purpose: In the Time of the *Decian* Persecution, a young Man, a *Christian*, then in the Flower and Beauty of his Age, whose Constancy had been oft attempted by other Means to no Purpose, he was at last set upon in this Manner; he was carried into a pleasant *Garden*, and into a Part of it beset with *Lillies* and *Roses* hard by the Banks of a *Crystal River*, whose soft *Murmurs*, together with the *Musick* made by the Leaves of the Trees, waven by the gentle Motions of the Wind, conspired to render it a Place for *Pleasure* and *Delight*: Here, upon a *Bed of Down* the young Man was laid; and that he might not be able to help himself, or shift his Posture, was tied down with *silken* Cords. The Company withdrawing, a beautiful *Strumpet* was sent in to him, who began to caress him with Kisses and Embraces, treating him with all the Arts of Wantonness, not consistent with *Modesty* to name. How to relieve himself in this Case, the poor Man knew not; but finding the Temptation beginning to prevail, he presently bit off his *Tongue*, and *spit* it in her Face as she attempted to *kiss* him, by the Greatness of his Pain extinguishing those *sensual* Titillations which her wicked Artifices began to kindle in him.

Vit. Pauli Eremit. tom. 1. *p.* 237.

Thirdly, They confidently assured them, That amongst *Christians* it was not only unlawful to be *actually* unclean, *but to look after a Woman with wanton and unchaste Desires*. Our Lord (says *Justin Martyr*) has told us, That whosoever *looks* after a Woman to *lust* after her, has already committed *Adultery* with her in his *Heart*; and that *if our Right Eye offend us, we must pluck it out*: As therefore human Laws condemn two Wives, so by the Laws of our *Master*, they are Sinners who look upon a Woman with unfit Desires after her; for not only

Ap. 2. *p.* 61, 62.

ly he that really commits Adultery is rejected by him, but even he that has a *Mind* to it; not only our *Actions*, but our very Thoughts being open unto God. So *Athenagoras*: So far are we from any promiſcuous Embraces, that we are not permitted the Freedom of an unchaſte Look; for, *whoever* (ſays our Lord) *looks after a Woman to deſire her, has play'd the Adulterer with her in his Heart.* Chap. 5. *Ut ſupra* p. 36.

We are not therefore allowed to uſe our Eyes to any other Purpoſes, than thoſe for which God created them, *viz.* to be *Lights* to the Body. To abuſe them to Wantonneſs, is to be guilty of Adultery; foraſmuch as they know they were made for other Ends, and cannot but be conſcious to themſelves of their own Thoughts: And how is it poſſible for Men under ſuch *Limitations* to be otherwiſe than chaſte and ſober? For we have not to deal with *Human* Laws, under which a Man may be wicked, and yet eſcape; but our Diſcipline was deliver'd by God himſelf: We have a Law, which makes our *ſelves* the *Rule* and *Meaſure* of *Righteouſneſs* towards others. According therefore to the Difference of Age we account ſome as *Sons* and *Daughters*, others as *Brethren* and *Siſters*, the more Aged we honour in the Place of *Parents*; thoſe therefore whom we account as *Siſters*, or as allied to us in any other Relation, we reckon it a Matter of great Concernment that they ſhould be chaſte and incorrupt.

Fourthly, They pleaded, that this Objection would eaſily vaniſh, if they would but conſider what a ſtrange *Change* and Alteration was in this very Caſe wrought upon Perſons at their firſt *Converſion* to Chriſtianity; immediately becoming quite of another Spirit and Temper from what they were before. We who before-time (ſays *Juſtin Martyr*, ſpeaking of the converting Power of the *Chriſtian* Doctrine) did pleaſe ourſelves in *Fornications* and Uncleanneſs, do now ſolely embrace *Ap.* 2. p. 61, 62.

Part II. Temperance and Chaſtity: What an innumerable Company could I name of thoſe who have left their Luxury and Intemperance, and come over to this kind of Life! for *Chriſt came not to call the Chaſte and Righteous*, [they needed it not] *but the Wicked, the Incontinent and the Unrighteous, to Repentance.* And in his other *Apology*, he gives an Inſtance of a Woman, who having, together with her Husband, lived a very *vicious* and debauched Courſe of Life, after her Converſion to Chriſtianity, become ſtrictly chaſte and ſober; and not content with this, ſhe urged her Husband alſo to do the like, laying before him the Doctrines of Chriſtianity, and perſuading him both by the Rewards and Puniſhments of another World: But he obſtinately refuſing, it begot a Quarrel between them, which ſtill ripen'd into a wider Breach, till it became Matter of publick Cognizance, and was an Occaſion for *Juſtin Martyr* to write that excellent *Apology* for the Chriſtians. Upon this Account *Tertullian* juſtly condemns the Madneſs of the Heathens, and their unreaſonable Prejudice againſt Chriſtianity, that they would hate their neareſt Relations meerly for being *Chriſtians*, though they ſaw how much they were every ways *bettered* by it in their Lives and Manners: The Father *diſ-inheriting* his Son, of whom now he had *no* Cauſe left to complain, but that he was a *Chriſtian*; the Maſter *impriſoning* his Servant, though now he had found him uſeful and neceſſary to him. But (what's more eſpecially to the Purpoſe) he tells us of ſome Husbands he knew, who tho' before ſo infinitely *jealous* of their Wives (and poſſibly not without reaſon) that a *Mouſe* could not ſtir in the Room, but it muſt be a *Gallant* creeping to their Bed; yet when upon their turning Chriſtians they became ſo eminently reſerved, chaſte and modeſt, that there was not the leaſt

Ap. 1. *p.* 41.

Ad Nation. l. 1. *c.* 4. *p.* 43.

Foun-

Foundation for Suſpicion, their *Jealouſy* was converted into *Hatred*, and they vow'd they had rather their Wives ſhould be *Strumpets* than *Chriſtians:* So obſtinately (ſays he) do Men ſtand in their own *Light*, and contend againſt thoſe Advantages which they might reap by Chriſtianity. This Argument from the powerful and ſucceſsful Influence of the Chriſtian Faith, *Origen* frequently makes uſe of: They muſt needs (ſays he) confeſs the Excellency and *Divinity* of Chriſt's Doctrine; whoever do but look into the *Lives* of thoſe that adhere to it, comparing their former Courſe of Life with that which they now lead; and conſidering in what Impurities, Luſts, and Wickedneſſes, every one of them wallowed before they embraced this Doctrine: But ſince that they entertained it, how much more grave, moderate, and conſtant are they become? Inſomuch that ſome of them, out of a Deſire of a more *tranſcendent* Purity, and that they may worſhip God with a chaſte Mind, deny themſelves even the Pleaſures of a *lawful* Bed. The ſame he affirms elſewhere, that thoſe whom the Gentiles ſcorn'd as the moſt rude and ſottiſh Perſons, being once initiated into the Faith and Diſcipline of the Holy *Jeſus*, were ſo far from Laſciviouſneſs, Filthineſs, and all manner of Uncleanneſs, that (like *Prieſts* wholly devoted to God) they altogether abſtain even from allowed Embraces; that there was no need for them (as ſome of the beſt among the *Gentiles* have done) to uſe Arts and *Medicines* to keep them chaſte; nor *Guardians* ſet over them to preſerve their Virginity; the Word of God being ſufficient to expel and drive out all irregular Appetites and Deſires. This alſo *Tertullian* obſerves, as the incomparable Excellency of the Chriſtian Doctrine above that of the beſt Philoſophers, that whenas *Democritus* was forced to put out his Eyes, becauſe not able to

Chap. 5.

Adv. Celſ. l. 1. p. 21.

Lib. 7. p. 365.

Ap. c. 46. p. 36.

Part II. defend himself from the Charms of Beauty; a Christian could *look* upon a Woman with chaste unseduced Eyes, being at the same time inwardly *blind* as to any Temptation from his Lust. With such a mighty Force did the Gospel come and captivate Mens Hearts into the Obedience of the Truth. Thence *Lactantius* makes this triumphant Challenge, where discoursing of the Prevalency which the Commands of God had upon the Minds of Men, as daily Experience did demonstrate: *Give me* (says he) *a Man that is angry, furious, and passionate; and with a few Words from God, I will render him as meek and quiet as a Lamb: Give me one that is lustful, filthy, and vicious, and you shall see him sober, chaste and continent.* The same he instances in most other Vices: *So great* (says he) *is the Power of the Divine Wisdom, that being infused into the Breast of a Man, it will soon expel that Folly which is the grand Parent of all Vice and Wickedness.*

Lib. 3. de falsa sapient. c. 26. p. 328.

The Innocency of Christians standing thus clear from this *wicked* Imputation, it may not be amiss, before we conclude, to enquire a little into the *Rise* and Original of this absurd and malicious Charge. *Origen* fathers it upon the *Jews*, as if they had falsly and spitefully invented it (as they did other things) to disgrace and prejudice Christianity; and he tells us, that in some measure it succeeded accordingly, keeping many at a Distance from the Christian Religion; and that even in his time there were some who for this very Reason would have no *Discourse* or *Commerce* with a *Christian*. But though both *Jew* and *Gentile* had Malice and Spite enough against the *Christians*, yet I can hardly think that it was a *purely invented* Falshood; but that it had some Ground of Pretence, though ill applied, and so we shall find it had: For which we are to know, that in the most early Times of Christianity, there were several

Cont. Cels. l. 60. p. 293, 294.

veral Sorts of *Hereticks* (who though they had their particular Names, yet all called themselves Christians, accounting that hereby they *graced* and honoured their Party, as *Epiphanius* tells us) the Followers of *Simon Magus*, *Menander*, *Marcion*, *Marcus*, *Basilides*, &c. who all went under the general Name of *Gnosticks*, and were, under the Pretence of Religion, guilty, of the most prodigious Villanies, and particularly those we are speaking of. *Irenæus* reports of them, that they gave up themselves to all Filthiness and Bestiality, not only privately *corrupting* the Women whom they had inveigled into their Sect (as some of them, returning after to the Church, *confessed* with Shame and Sorrow) but openly and with bare Face *marrying* the Women whom they had *seduced* from their Husbands; committing the most execrable Wickednesses, and *laughing* at the Pious and *Orthodox* Christians whom the *Fear of God* restrained from Sin either in Word or Thought, as a Company of *ignorant* and *silly* Fellows; magnifying themselves, styling themselves *Perfect, and the Seeds of Election.* And much more in other Places to the same Purpose, where he gives Account of the prophane and hellish Rites of their Assemblies. Of the *Carpocratians*, another Gang of those *brutish* Hereticks, *Clemens Alexandrinus* relates the same, both as to their Doctrines and Practices, reporting the matter almost in the very same Circumstances wherein it is charged upon the Christians by the Heathen in *Min. Felix*, *viz.* That both Men and Women used to meet at *Supper* (which they had in Imitation of the true *Christian* ἀγάπη, or *Love-Feast*) where after they had loaded themselves with a plentiful Meal, to prevent all Shame (if they had any remained) they put out the *Lights*, and then promiscuously mixed in Filthiness with one another, or else each sorting as they pleased.

Chap. 5.

Hæres. 29. *p.* 58.

Adv. Hær. lib. 1. *c.* 1. *p.* 28. *vid. etiam c.* 9. *p.* 70. *&c.* 32. *p.* 132.

Strom. l. 3. *p.* 430.

Part II. And of the *Gnosticks*, *Epiphanius* tells us, That they had their Wives in *common*, and if any Stranger of their Party came to them, both Men and Women had this Mark and Sign to know one another by; ſtretching out their *Hands* by way of Salutation, they uſed to *tickle* each other in the *Ball* of the Hand, by which they were ſatisfied that the Stranger really was of their Gang and Party. Amongſt their Brethren the *Carpocratians*, they were wont to mark their Diſciples and Proſelytes under the *right Ear* with a Brand, a Slit, or a Hole, that they might the more readily diſcern them; (this agrees exactly with the Charge of the Heathens, that they *knew* one another at the firſt *Sight* by privy Marks and Signs) and having thus owned and received each other, they went to their luxurious Feaſts, and to thoſe horrid Brutiſhneſſes that followed after.

Hær. 26. *p.* 42.

Ib. Hær. 27. *p.* 51.

Now this being the Caſe with theſe abominable Wretches, who yet had the Face to call themſelves *Chriſtians*, it is no Wonder if *Jews* and *Gentiles*, who were greedy of any Occaſion to beſpatter and reproach *Chriſtians*, and rather than not find an Occaſion, would *make* one, charged it upon all Chriſtians; either not knowing it to be otherwiſe, or if they did, not willing to diſtinguiſh between true and falſe. And that this was the true and only Riſe and Ground of the Charge, beſides ſome Intimations of it in *Juſtin Martyr*, we have it expreſly aſſerted by *Euſebius*, as that which gave Being to that abſurd and impious Opinion, which ſpread ſo faſt among the Heathens, of the Chriſtians being guilty of promiſcuous Mixtures, to the great Reproach and Infamy of the *Chriſtian* Name. I do not deny but this malicious Report might receive Strength and *Encouragement* from the Servants of ſome Chriſtians, who being racked by the Heathens, might confeſs what they put into

Ap. 2. *p.* 56, 60. *Hiſt. Eccl. l.* 4. *c.* 7. *p.* 120.

into their Mouths, and this Charge amongſt the reſt. This the ſame *Hiſtorian* relates out of the Letters of the Churches in *France:* Certain *Gentiles*, who were Servants to ſome Chriſtians, being apprehended, and having ſeen the exquiſite Torments which the Chriſtians were put to, for Fear of the like, did, at the *Inſtance* of the Soldiers, who urged them to it, confeſs, That the Chriſtians had amongſt them *inceſtuous* Mixtures, and Suppers furniſhed with *Man's* Fleſh; laying ſuch things to their Charge as they held unlawful to *ſpeak* or *think* of, or could *believe* were ever done by Men: Which being once divulged, they every where fell upon the Chriſtians with the greateſt Rage and Fierceneſs. So in the Perſecution under *Maximinus*, one of the Commanders that then reſided at *Damaſcus* laid hold of a few light inconſiderable *Women* in the Market, and threatning them with the Rack, forced the Wretches publickly to confeſs that they had formerly been Chriſtians, and that they knew all their *Villanies*, that in their Religious Meetings they committed the moſt beaſtly Actions; and indeed whatever elſe he would have them ſay, that might diſgrace Chriſtianity. This Confeſſion of theirs he cauſed to be entred into the publick *Records*, and then tranſmitted it to the *Emperor*, by whoſe Command it was immediately publiſhed in all Cities and Places of the Empire: So induſtriouſly did the Malice of Men and Devils bend all the *Nerves* of their Power and Subtilty (tho' in vain) either wholly to *ſuppreſs*, or at leaſt to *diſhearten* and baffle out the Chriſtians! Which brings me to the Conſideration of another Vertue no leſs remarkable in the *Chriſtians* of thoſe Times.

Chap. 5.

Lib. 5. *c.* 1. *p.* 156.

Id. l. c. 5. *p.* 350.

CHAP. VI.

Of their Readineſs and Conſtancy in Profeſſing their Religion.

Their Courage and Undauntedneſs in profeſſing the Truth, tho' reproached and perſecuted. Their open and reſolute owning it to the Face of their Enemies, and in Defiance of the greateſt Dangers. The Story of Victorinus *the Rhetorician converted by* Simplician. *The free and impartial Anſwers of* Maris *to* Julian, *of* Baſil *to the* Arian *Governor.* Polycarp's *refuſing to fly, when Officers were ſent to apprehend him. His reſolute Carriage before the Proconſul. The like of* Cyprian. *No Torments could make them deny Chriſt. Women unconquerable. The excellent Inſtance of* Blandina *and others. Divers voluntarily offering themſelves. Others offering to plead the Cauſe of the Chriſtians, tho' with the immediate Hazard of their Lives. This Boldneſs and Reſolution noted as an Argument of the Excellency of their Religion, and the Goodneſs of their Cauſe above that of the beſt Philoſophers.* Ariſtotle's *flying for Fear of ſuffering for his Opinions. The cowardly Silence of* Jamblichus's *Scholars. This Reſolution of theirs confeſſed by Heathens,* Pliny, Apollo's *Oracle in the Caſe of* Porphyry's *Wife,* Galen, *&c. The Conſtancy of Chriſtians to their Religion, Proverbial.*

WHEN

Chap. 6.

WHEN our Blessed Saviour sent out his Disciples to preach the Gospel, he acquainted them with the Difficulties that were like to attend their Message; but withal, bad them arm themselves with Constancy and Resolution, and not to regard the Scoffs and Reproaches, the Miseries and Sufferings that might fall upon them; *not to fear them that could only kill the Body*, but to make a free and bold *Confession* of his Name before the World, and chearfully to *take up their Cross and follow him.* And S. *Paul*, tho' himself then in Chains at *Rome*, exhorts the Christians to *stand fast in one Spirit, with one Mind striving together for the Faith of the Gospel, being in nothing terrify'd by their Adversaries; it being given them on the Behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his Sake*; which made it very necessary for them to have their *Feet shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace.* And certainly, if ever true Courage and Greatness of Mind appear'd in any Persons in the World, it was in the *Christians of those Times*, who with such a generous and unterrify'd Mind defy'd Dangers and Torments, own'd and glory'd in the Profession of *Christianity* against all the Threats, Reproaches, and Persecutions, which the worst of their Adversaries could make against them. We shall first see what Account their Apologists give of it even before their Enemies, and then how they made it good in their Lives and Actions.

Justin Martyr speaking of the successful Propagation of the Gospel, immediately upon *Christ*'s Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven: The Apostles of Christ (says he) going forth from *Jerusalem*, preached the powerful Word in every Place; altho' it were *capital* either to *preach* or to *profess* the Name of *Christ*, which yet we do every where embrace and teach; which if you (as Enemies) still go on

Apol. 2. *Pag.* 38.

to

Part II. to obstruct, the worst you can do is but to *kill* us, whereby you will do us no great harm, but will purchase to yourselves, and to all those that unjustly persecute us, and persist impenitent in their Proceedings, the *Vengeance* of Eternal Flames. And when *Trypho* the *Jew* had charged *Christianity* for an idle Story, and the *Christians* for no better than *Fools* to quit all the Conveniences of this Life upon the Account of it; the *Martyr* answers, That this proceeded from his Ignorance, and an implicit Assent to the absurd and malicious Insinuations of their *Rabbins*, who understood very little of the *Scriptures*; that would he but admit the true Reasons of Christianity, he would quickly understand how far they were from being in an Error, and how little Reason they had to quit their Profession; altho' Men did sufficiently scorn and reproach them for it, and the Powers of the World endeavour to force them to renounce and forsake it: Notwithstanding all which, they chose rather to die, and chearfully underwent it; being fully assured, that what *God* had *promised* thro' *Christ*, he would infallibly make good to them. And discoursing afterwards of the same Matter, As for us *(says he)* that have entertained the Religion of the Holy *Jesus*, yourselves know very well, there is none throughout the World that is able to *subdue* or *affright* us out of our Profession; nothing being plainer, than that tho' our Heads be exposed to *Swords* and *Axes*, our Bodies fastned to the *Cross*, tho' thrown to *wild Beasts*, haras's'd out with *Chains*, *Fire*, and all other Instruments of *Torment*, yet do we not start from our Profession: Nay, the more these things happen to us, the faster others flock over to the Name of *Jesus*, and become pious and devout Followers of Christ; it being with us in this Case as with a *Vine*, which being *pruned* and *trimmed*, and its luxurious Excrescences pared off,

Dial. cum Tryph. p. 226.

Ib. p. 223. *D.*

Ib. p. 337.

off, brings forth more fruitful and flouriſhing Branches. How little he valued any Danger in Competition with the Truth, he tells his Adverſary he might know by this, that he would not ſtifle and conceal it, altho' they ſhould immediately tear him in Pieces for it; and therefore when he ſaw his Countrymen the *Samaritans* ſeduced by the Impoſtures of *Simon Magus*, whom they held to be a *God above all Principality and Power*, he could not but by an Addreſs make his Complaint to *Cæſar*, not regarding the Hazards and Troubles that might enſue upon it. *Tertullian* giving the Heathens an Account of that Chriſt whom they worſhipped, tells them they might well believe it to be true, for that no Man might *lye* for his Religion; to diſſemble in this Caſe, being to *deny* a thing which could not be charged upon the *Chriſtians*, who owned and ſtood to it with the laſt Drop of Blood. *We ſpeak it* (ſays he) *and we ſpeak it* openly, *yea, while you are tearing our Fleſh and* ſhedding *our Blood, we cry aloud, that we worſhip God through* Chriſt. So fully were they ſatisfy'd in the Truth of their Religion, as to be ready rather a thouſand times to *die*, than to *deny* it. Chap. 6. *Ib. p.* 339. *Ap.* 21. *p.* 21.

Nor were theſe merely *big Words* with which the Chriſtians vapour'd in the Sight of their Enemies; we ſhall find that they made them good by *acting* ſuitably to theſe Profeſſions and Proteſtations. They did not then think it enough to eſpouſe the Faith of *Chriſt*, unleſs they publickly teſtify'd it to the World; whereof this Inſtance amongſt others: *Victorinus*, a *Rhetorician* of *Rome*, a Man of ſo great Note and Fame, that he had obtained the Honour of a Publick *Statue*, but a zealous Defender of *Paganiſm* and *Idolatry*, had read the Holy Scriptures, by which being convinced, he came to *Simplician*, and privately told him that he was a *Chriſtian*; which the other refuſed to believe, *Aug. Conf. l.* 8. *c.* 2. *tom.* 1. *col.* 136, 137.

Part II. lieve, unless he saw him testify it in the publick Church; to which *Victorinus* returned with a little Scorn, *What are they then the Walls that make a Christian?* This Answer he has oft returned as the other urged a publick Confession, for he was not willing to disoblige his great Friends who he knew would fall foul upon him; till by Reading and Meditation he gathered Courage, and fearing that *Christ* would deny him before the *Holy Angels*, if he should refuse to confess him before Men, he became sensible of his Fault, and was ashamed of his Vanity and Folly, and calling to *Simplician*, *Let us go* (said he) *into the Church, I will now become a Christian*; which when he had done, and had been thorowly instructed in the Faith of *Christ*, he offer'd himself to Baptism; and being to make the accustomed *Confession* of his Faith, the Ministers of the Church offer'd him the Liberty of doing it in a more *private* way, (as they were wont to do for those who were of a fearful and bashful Temper) which he utterly refused, and openly made it before all the People; affirming it to be unreasonable, that he should be ashamed to confess his *Hopes* of Salvation *before the People*, who while he taught *Rhetorick* (wherein he hoped for no such Reward) had publickly professed it every day. An Action that begat great Wonder in *Rome*, as it was no less matter of Rejoicing to the Church: No Dangers could then sway good Men from doing of their Duty. *Cyprian* highly commends *Cornelius* for taking the Bishoprick of *Rome* upon him in so dangerous a time; for the Greatness of his Mind, and the unshaken Firmness of his Faith, and the undaunted Managery of his Place, at a time when *Decius* the Tyrant threatned such heavy Severities to the Ministers of Christianity, and would sooner endure a *Cor-rival* in the Empire, than a Bishop to sit at *Rome*. How freely, how impartially did they speak

Ad Antonian. Epist. 52. p. 68.

speak their Minds, even to the Faces of their bitterest Enemies? When *Maris*, Bishop of *Chalcedon*, a Man blind with Age, met *Julian* the Emperor, he boldly charged him with his *Atheism* and *Apostacy* from the Christian Faith: *Julian* reproached him with his *Blindness*, and told him his *Galilean* God would never cure him. To which the good old Man presently answer'd, *I thank my God who has taken away my Sight, that I might not behold the Face of one that has lapsed into so great Impiety.* Chap. 6. *Socr. Hist. Eccl. l. 3. c. 12. p. 183.*

Were they at any time attempted by Arts of *Flattery* and Enticement, the Charms would not take place upon them. So when *Julian*, both by himself and the Officers of his Army, set upon the Soldiers, and by fair Promises of Preferments and Rewards, sought to fetch them off from Christianity, tho' he prevailed upon some few weak and instable Minds, yet the far greatest Part stood off; yea, by many even of the *meanest* and most inconsiderable Quality, his *Temptations* were as resolutely beaten back, as the *Blow* of an Engine is by a Wall of *Marble*. Nor were there any more shaken by Storms and Threatnings. When *Modestus* the Governor under *Valens* the *Arian* Emperor could not by any Means bring over S. *Basil* to the Party, he threatned him with Severity: Dost thou not *fear* this Power that I have? Why should I fear? said *Basil*: What can'st thou *do*, or what can I *suffer*? The other answer'd, the Loss of thy *Estate*, *Banishment*, *Torment*, and *Death*. But threaten us with something else if thou can'st (said *Basil*) for none of these things can reach us: Confiscation of *Estate* cannot hurt him that has nothing to lose, unless thou wanteſt these *tatter'd* and thread-bare Garments, and a few *Books*, wherein all my Estate lies: Nor can I be properly *banish'd*, who am not tied to any Place; where-ever I am 'twill be my Country, *the whole Earth is God's*, in which I am but a *Pilgrim* and a Stranger. *Naz. Orat. in Jul. 1. p. 75.* *Id. in laud. Basil. Orat. 20. p. 349, 350.*

Part II. Stranger. I fear no *Torments*, my Body not being able to hold out beyond the first Stroke; and for *Death*, it will be a *Kindness* to me; for it will but so much the sooner send me unto *God*, for whose sake I live, and am indeed in a great Measure already dead, towards which I have been a long time hastening. And there is no Reason to wonder at this *Freedom* of Speech; in other things we are meek and yielding, but when the *Cause of God* and Religion is concerned, over-looking all other things, we direct our Thoughts only unto him; and then *Fire* and *Sword*, *wild Beasts* and *Engines* to tear off our Flesh, are so far from being a *Terror*, that they are rather a *Pleasure* and *Recreation* to us. Reproach and threaten, and use your Power to the utmost, yet let the Emperor know, that you shall never be able to make us assent to your *wicked* Doctrine; no, tho' you should threaten ten thousand times worse than all this. The Governor was strangely surprized with the Spirit and Resolution of the Man, and went and told the Emperor, *That one poor Bishop was too hard for them all.* And indeed so big were their Spirits with a Desire to assert and propagate their Religion, that they would not hide their Heads to decline the greatest Dangers. When the Officers were sent to apprehend S. *Polycarp*, and had with great Industry and Cruelty found out the Place where he was, tho' he had timely Notice to have escaped by going into another House, yet he refused, saying, *The Will of the Lord be done*; and coming down out of his Chamber, saluted the Officers with a chearful and pleasant Countenance. As they were carrying him back, two Persons of Eminency and Authority met him in the way, took him up into their Chariot, labour'd by all Means to persuade him to do *Sacrifice*; which when he absolutely refused, after all their Importunities, they turned their

Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 4. c. 15. p. 130.

Kind-

Kindneſs into *Reproaches*, and tumbled him with ſo much Violence out of the Chariot, that he was ſorely *bruiſed* with the Fall; but nothing daunted, as if he had received no harm, he chearfully went on his Way; a Voice being heard as he went along, as it were from Heaven, *Polycarp, be ſtrong, and quit thyſelf like a Man.* When he came before the Tribunal, the *Proconſul* asked him, whether he was *Polycarp?* which he preſently confeſſed. Then he attempted by all Arts of Perſuaſion to urge him to *deny Chriſt*, or to do but ſomething that might look *like* it; but all in vain: *Theſe fourſcore and ſix Years* (ſays he) *have I ſerved Chriſt, and he never did me any harm; and how then can I blaſpheme my Maſter and my Saviour?* Being urged to ſwear by the Emperor's *Genius*, he reply'd, Foraſmuch as thou preſſeſt me to do this, pretending thou knoweſt not who I am, know, *I am a Chriſtian.* Then the *Proconſul* told him, he would throw him to the *wild Beaſts*, unleſs he alter'd his Opinion: Call for them (anſwer'd *Polycarp*) for we have no Mind to change from *better* to *worſe*; as counting that Change only to be honeſt and laudable, which is from *Vice* to *Vertue.* But if thou makeſt ſo light of wild Beaſts (added the *Proconſul*) I'il have a *Fire* that ſhall tame thee. To which the good old Man returned, You threaten, Sir, a Fire that will burn for an *Hour*, and preſently be *extinguiſhed*; but know not, that there is a Fire of *eternal* Damnation in the Judgment to come, reſerved for the Puniſhment of all wicked Men: But why delay you? Execute whatever you have a Mind to. This, and much more to the ſame purpoſe he diſcourſed of, to the great Admiration of the *Proconſul*; being ſo far from being terrify'd with what was ſaid to him, that he was filled with Joy and Chearfulneſs; and a certain *Grace* and Lovelineſs over-ſpread his Face. Chap. 6.

So

Part II.

So likewise when *Cyprian* was brought before the *Proconsul*: Thou art (said he) *Thascius Cyprian*, who hast been a *Ring-leader* to Men of a *wicked* Mind; the Emperor commands thee to do *Sacrifice*, and therefore consult thy Welfare. To which he answer'd, *I am* Cyprian, *I am a Christian, and I cannot sacrifice to your Gods; do therefore what you are commanded; as for me, in so just a Cause there needs no Consultation.* And when the Sentence was pronounced against him, he cried out, *I heartily thank Almighty God, who is pleased to free me from the Chains of this earthly Carcass.* Had Torments and the very Extremities of Cruelty been able to *sink* their Courage, it had soon been trodden under foot; but it was triumphant in the midst of Torments, and lift up its Head *higher*, the greater the Loads that were laid upon it; whereof there are Instances enough in the *Histories* of the Church: Nay, in this Triumph, even the *weaker* Sex bore no inconsiderable Part. *Eusebius* tells us (among others that suffer'd in the *French* Persecution under *M. Aurelius*) of one *Blandina*, a good Woman, but of whom the Church was afraid how she would hold out to make a resolute Confession, by reason of the Weakness of her Body, and the Tenderness of her Education; that when she came to it, she bore up with such invincible Magnanimity, that her Tormenters, tho' they took their Turns from Morning to Night, and plied her with all Kinds of Racks and Tortures, were yet forced to *give over*, and confess themselves *overcome*; wondring that a Body so broken and mangled, should yet be able to draw its Breath. But this noble *Athleta* gained Strength by suffering; she eased and refreshed herself, and mitigated the Sense of present Pain by repeating these Words, *I am a Christian*, and, *no Evil is done by us.* Nor did they only generously bear these things for the sake of their Religion,

Act. Passion. Cyp. in vit. ejus, p. 17.

Hist. Eccl. l. c. 1. *p.* 157.

gion, when they were laid upon them, but many times freely offered themselves, confessing themselves to be *Christians*, when they knew that their Confession would cost their Lives. So did those noble *Martyrs*, whom *Eusebius* saw at *Thebais*, Multitudes having been executed every Day with all imaginable Cruelties: Sentence was no sooner passed against one Party of them, but others presented themselves before the *Tribunal*, and confessed that they were *Christians*, receiving the fatal Sentence with all possible Expressions of Chearfulness and Rejoicing. The same which he also reports of six young Men, that suffered in *Palestine*, spontaneously addressing themselves to the Governour of the *Province*, owning that they were *Christians*, and ready to undergo the severest Punishments. In the *Acts* of St. *Cyprian*'s Passion, we are told, That the President having caused a mighty *Furnace* to be filled with *burning Lime*, and *Fire*, with Heaps of *Frankincense* round about the Brim of it, gave the *Christians* this Choice, either to *burn* the Frankincense in Sacrifice to *Jupiter*, or to be thrown into the Furnace; whereupon three hundred Men, being armed with an unconquerable Faith, and confessing *Christ* to be the *Son of God*, leaped into the Midst of the fiery Furnace, with whose Fumes and Vapours they were immediately suffocated, and swallowed up.

Πολλοὶ δὲ τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς ὁπηνίκα ἐπὶ τοῖς ἑαυτῶν ὁμολογήσαντες μᾶλλον χριστιανισμὸν, ἀποθανεῖν ἠρνήσαντο ἢ ἀπολυθῆναι, καὶ τὰ ἀπαρχόντα ἀπολήψεσθαι, καλεφρόνησαν μᾶλλον τὸν βίον, ἢ τὸν ὑπὲρ εὐσεβείας θάνατον εἵλοντο.
Orig. contr. Cels. l. 2. p. 71.

De Martyr. Palæst. c. 3. p. 321.

Ubi supra p. 16.

There wanted not some, who in the hottest Persecutions durst venture to undertake the Cause of *Christians*, and to *plead* it before the Face of their bittereſt Enemies: Thus did *Vettius Epagatus*, a Man full of Zeal and Piety, who seeing his Fellow-Christians unjustly dragged before the Judgement-Seat, required Leave of the *President*, that he might plead

Euſ. l. 5. c. 1. p. 155.

Part II. his Brethrens Cause, and openly shew, That they were not guilty of the least Wickedness or Impiety; but not daring to grant him so reasonable a Request, the Judge took the Advantage of asking him, Whether he was a *Christian?* Which he publickly owning, was adjudged to the same Martyrdom with the Rest. Of *Origen* we read, That though then but Eighteen Years of Age, yet he was wont not only to wait upon the *Martyrs* in Prison, but to attend upon them at their Trials, and the Times of their Execution, kissing and embracing them, and boldly preaching and professing the Faith of *Christ*; insomuch, that had he not been many times miraculously preserved, the *Gentiles* had pelted him to Death with Stones; for they mortally hated him for his industrious and undaunted Propagation of the Faith. Nay, when but a Boy, and his Father *Leontius* was seized upon, he wrote to his Father, most earnestly pressing him to persevere unto Martyrdom, and not to concern himself what might become of his Wife and Children; nor for their Sakes to decline that excellent Cause he was engaged in.

Ib. l. 6. c. 2. p. 204.

Ib. c. 2. p. 202.

By this free and chearful undergoing the greatest Miseries, rather than deny or prejudice their Religion, *Christians* evidently demonstrated the Goodness of their Principles, and shewed, they were no such Persons as their Enemies commonly looked upon them; that a *Christian* (as *Ignatius* observes) is not a Child of *Fancy* and Perswasion, but of true *Gallantry* and Greatness of Spirit, having so much Hatred of the World to grapple and contend with. Those who are Malefactors (as *Tertullian* argues) desire to be concealed, and shun to appear; being apprehended, they *tremble*; being accused, they *deny*; being racked, do not easily, nor always *confess* the Truth: However, being condemned, they are sad, and search into, and censure themselves; are *unwilling* to acknowledge

Epist. ad Roman. p. 57.

Apol. c. 1. & 2.

knowledge their Wickedneſſes to be their own, and accordingly impute them either to their *Fate* or *Stars*. But what is there like this, to be found in *Chriſtians?* Amongſt them no Man is *aſhamed*, none *repents* him of his being a *Chriſtian*, unleſs it be that he was no ſooner ſo: If marked out, he *glories*; if accuſed, he ſtands not to *defend* himſelf; being interrogated, he confeſſes of his own accord; being condemned, he gives Thanks: What Evil then can there be in this, which is ſo far from having any Shadow of *Evil*, any *Fear*, *Shame*, *Tergiverſation*, *Repentance*, or *Deplorableneſs* to attend it? What Evil can that be, of which he that is guilty *rejoices?* of which to be accuſed, is their *Vote* and *Deſire*; and for which to be puniſhed, is their *Happineſs* and *Felicity?* This likewiſe *Arnobius* lays down as a grand Evidence of the Divinity of the Chriſtian Faith, that in ſo ſhort a Time it had conquered ſo much of the World: Subdued Men of the greateſt Parts and Learning: Made them willing to quit their beloved *Opinions*, to forfeit their *Eſtates*, to part with their *Eaſe* and *Pleaſures*, and to ſubmit to Torments, ratherthan violate the Faith of *Chriſt*, or ſtart from the Station they had entered upon. By this excellent Temper and Carriage they admirably triumphed over the beſt Men amongſt the *Gentiles*, none of whom durſt engage ſo deep for the Defence of their deareſt Sentiments, as the *Chriſtians* did for theirs. Witneſs *Plato*, who ſet up the *Academy*, and brought in an *obſcure* and *ambiguous* Way of delivering his Opinions, leſt by ſpeaking out he ſhould fall under the Sentence and the Fate of *Socrates*. Thus *Origen* puts *Celſus* in Mind of *Ariſtotle*, who underſtanding, that the *Athenians* intended to call him to account for ſome of his (as they thought them) *un-orthodox* Opinions, immediately removed his School, ſaying to his Friends, *Let us be gone from*

Chap. 6.

Adv. gent. lib. 2. p. 21.

Cont. Celſ. lib. p. 51.

Part. II. Athens, *lest we give them an Occasion of being guilty of a second Wickedness like to that which they committed against* Socrates, *and lest they again offend against the Majesty of Philosophy*: It being, alas! not Kindness to the *Athenians*, but *Cowardise* and Fear of Punishment, made him so hastily pack up and be gone, and leave his Opinions behind him to shift for themselves as well as they could. Nay, *Eunapius* himself confesses, That in the Time of *Constantine*, when *Paganism* began to go down the Wind, and *Christianity* to be advanced and honoured, their best Philosophers, the great Scholars of *Jamblicus*, took Sanctuary at a mysterious *Secrecy*, and wisely kept their *Dogmata* and Opinions to themselves, sealed up under a profound and religious Silence. No, they were the *Christians* only, the very *meanest* of whom durst stand by and defend *naked Truth* in the Face of Danger and Death it self; this being (as *Eusebius* notes) one of the most wonderful Things in the *Christian Religion*, That they who embrace it, are not only ready to profess it in Words, but entertain it with such a mighty Affection and Sincerity of Soul, as willingly to prefer the bearing Testimony to it even before Life it self. And indeed this Piece of Right is done them by * *Pliny* himself, where speaking of some, who having been accused for *Christians*, to shew how far they were from it, readily *blasphemed Christ*, and *sacrificed* to the Gods; he adds, *None of which, 'tis said, that they who are truly Christians, can by any means be compelled to do.* Nay, thus much is confessed by the *Oracle* it self; for when *Porphyry* the great Philosopher, and acute Enemy of the *Christians*, enquired of *Apollo*'s Oracle what *God* he should make his Address to, for the Recovery of his *Wife* back from *Christianity*; the *Oracle* returned him this Answer (as himself reported in his Book, περὶ τῆς ἐκ λογίων φιλοσοφίας, not θεολογία φιλοσοφίας, as 'tis corruptly

In vit. Ædesii. p. 33.

Hist. lib. 1. *c.* 3. *p.* 14.

* *Epist.* 97. *lib.* 10.

ruptly in St. *Auguſtine*, * a Book frequently cited both by *Euſebius* and *Theodoret*, where, by the way, in the *Latin* Verſion of *Theodoret*, 'tis by a ſtrange Miſtake rendred *de Electorum Philoſophia*, as if it had been ἐκλογῶν: In this Book concerning the *Philoſophy* drawn from *Oracles*, he tells us, he received this Anſwer) *That he might as well, and to better purpoſe, attempt to write upon the Surface of the Water, or to fly like a Bird in the Air, than to reduce his Wife from thoſe wicked Sentiments ſhe had taken in.* And this was ſo common and notorious, that it became in a manner *proverbial*; whence that of † *Galen*, when he would expreſs how pertinaciouſly the Philoſophers adhered to thoſe Sentiments they had once drunk in, and how very hard, and almoſt impoſſible it was to convince them; *Sooner*, ſays he, *may a Man undeceive a Few or a Chriſtian, and make them renounce the Doctrine of* Moſes *or of* Chriſt, *than Philoſophers and Phyſicians that are once addicted to their ſeveral Sects.*

Chap 7.

* *Apud. Auguſt. de Civ. Dei, lib. 19. c. 23. col. 1181. de præpar. Evang. lib. 4. de Curand. Græc. Affect.*

† Θαῦμον γὰρ ἄν τις τῆς ἀπὸ Μωυσῆ καὶ Χριστοῦ μεταδιδαξειεν, ἢ τοὺς ταῖς αἱρέσεσι προσπεπονθότας ἰατροὺς καὶ φιλοσόφους. Galen. περὶ διαφ. σφυγμῶν, lib 3. fol. 18. p. 2. tom. 3.

CHAP. VII.

Of their Exemplary Patience under Sufferings.

Chriſtianity likely to engage its Followers in Suffering; and why continual Edicts put forth againſt Chriſtians. The Form of thoſe Imperial Orders exemplified out of the Acts of the Martyrs. The fierce Oppoſition of the Roman *Emperors, and their probable Hopes of having deſtroyed Chriſtianity, evidenced from ſeveral Inſcriptions to that purpoſe found in* Spain. *The Greatneſs of the Torments Chriſtians endured*

dured: Some of the ordinary Kinds of them described. The Cross; *the Pain and Ignominy of it: Persons crucified with their Heads downwards. The Rack, what.* Catasta: ad Pulpitum post Catastam. Ungulæ: *one of these kept and adored as a Relique at* Rome. *The Wheel. Burning. Throwing to Wild Beasts. Being Condemned to Mines; their Treatment there, and the Case of such Persons. Some of the extraordinary Ways of Punishment used towards Christians. Torn asunder by Branches of Trees: Burnt in pitched Coats: Boiled in Pots of Oil or Lead,* &c. *Their Carriage under their Sufferings sedate and calm, meek and patient. Their Refusing to make use of Opportunities to avoid Suffering. Whether they might fly and withdraw in Times of Persecution: Allowed and practised in some Cases; two instanced in. Where Persons were of more than ordinary Use and Eminency. Where they were weak for the present, and not like to hold out. Proved by particular Instances. Their chearful Offering themselves to the Rage and Fury of their Enemies, confessed by the Relation of their Judges and bittereſt Adversaries,* Tiberianus, Arius, Antonius, Lucian. *The earneſt Desire of Martyrdom in* Ignatius, Laurentius, Origen, *and others. When unjustly condemned, their Judges thanked for condemning them. Their Glory in Suffering and being Crucified.* Babylas *the Martyr's Chains buried with him. No Signs of an impatient*

patient Mind under their bittereſt Torments. An Account of their chearful Suffering, out of Cyprian. *Their Patience wondred at by their Enemies. Their grand Support under Suffering; the Hopes and Aſſurance of a Reward in Heaven. The Caſe of the forty Martyrs in* St. Baſil. *Pſalms ſung at the Funeral of Chriſtians, and Lights carried before the Corps, and why. Chriſtianity vaſtly increaſed by the Patience and Conſtancy of Chriſtians.* Juſtin Martyr's *Account of his Converſion by this Means.* Julian *generally refuſed to put Chriſtians to death, and why. The Teſtimonies of ſeveral Heathens concerning the Chriſtians Courage and Patience under Sufferings.*

THAT the Chriſtian Religion at its firſt Appearing in the World was likely to engage its Followers in Miſeries and Sufferings, could not be unknown to any that conſidered the Nature of its Doctrine, and the *Tendency* of its Deſign. The *Severity* of its Precepts, ſo directly oppoſite to the *corrupt* and vicious Inclinations of Men; the *Purity* of its Worſhip, ſo flatly contrary to the *looſe* and obſcene Rites and Solemnities of the Heathens; its abſolute Inconſiſtency with thoſe Religions which had obtained for ſo many Ages, which then had ſuch firm *Poſſeſſion* of the Minds of Men, and all the *Powers* and *Policies* of the World to ſecure and back them; could not propheſy to it any kind of welcome Entertainment. *This Sect* (for ſo they called it) *was every where* not only *ſpoken*, but *fought againſt*: For ſince Men have a natural Veneration for *Antiquity*, and eſpecially in Matters of Religion, they thought themſelves concerned to defend that Way,

Part II. which had been conveyed to them from their *Ancestors*, and to set themselves with Might and Main against, whatever might oppose it: especially the *Great Ones* of those Times; and the *Roman Emperors* made it their Master-design to oppress and stifle this Infant-Religion, and to banish it out of the World. Hence those Imperial *Orders* that were daily sent abroad into all Parts of the Empire, to command and impower their Governours to ruine and destroy the *Christians*; of which, that we may the better apprehend the *Form* of them, it may not be amiss to set down one or two of them out of the *Acts of the Martyrs*. This following was agreed upon both by the *Emperors*, and the whole *Senate* of *Rome*. Decius *and* Valerian *Emperors, Triumphers, Conquerors, Augusts, Pious, together with the whole Senate, have by common Consent decreed thus: Whereas we have received the Gifts and Blessings of the Gods, by whom we enjoy Victory over our Enemies, as also temperate Seasons, and Fruits in great Plenty and Abundance; since we have found them our great Benefactors, and to supply us with those Things that are universally beneficial to all: We therefore unanimously decree, That all Orders of Men, as well Children as Servants, Soldiers as private Persons, shall offer Sacrifices to the Gods, doing Reverence and Supplication to them. And if any shall dare to violate our divine Order thus unanimously agreed upon, we command, that he be cast into Prison, and afterwards exposed to several Kinds of Torments. If by this means he be reclaimed, he may expect no mean Honours from us. But if he shall persist contumacious, after many Tortures, let him be beheaded, or thrown into the Sea, or cast out to be devoured by Dogs and Birds of Prey: But especially, if there be any found of the Religion of the* Christians. *As for those that obey our Decrees, they shall receive great Honours and Rewards from us. So happily fare ye well.*

Metaphrast. in Martyr. S. Mercur. apud Sur. ad 24 Novemb. tom. 6.

To

To this we may add that short *Rescript* of *Valerian*. Valerian *the Emperor, to the Ministers and Governours of Provinces: We understand that the Precepts of the Laws are violated by those who in these days call themselves* Christians. *Wherefore we will, that apprehending them, unless they sacrifice to our Gods, you expose them to divers Kinds of Punishments; that so both Justice may have place without delay, and Vengeance, in cutting off Impieties, having attained its End, may proceed no further.* This Course they prosecuted with so much Vigour and Fierceness, that some of them boasted, that they had absolutely effected their Design. Witness those *Trophies* and triumphal *Arches*, that were every where erected to perpetuate the Memory of their Conquest over Christianity; whereof these two *Inscriptions*, found at *Clunia* in *Spain*, are a sufficient Evidence. Chap. 7. *Act. Symphor. apud Sur. ad 22. Aug tom. 4.*

DIOCLESIANUS JOVIUS ET
MAXIMIAN. HERCULEUS
CAES. AUG.
AMPLIFICATO, PER ORIEN-
TEM ET OCCIDENTEM,
IMP. ROM.
E T
NOMINE CHRISTIANORUM
DELETO, QUI REMP. EVER-
TEBANT. *Gruter. Inscript. p. 210. Num. 3.*

The other,

DIOCLESIAN. CAES.
AUG. GALERIO IN ORI-
ENTE ADOPT. SUPER-
STITIONE CHRIST--
UBIQ, DELETA, ET CUL-
TU DEOR. PROPAGATO. *Ib. num. 4.*

The Meaning of both which, is to shew, that *Diocleſian* and his Collegue *Maximianus* had every

Part II. try where exſtinguiſhed the wicked *Superſtition* of *Chriſt*, ſo pernicious to the Commonwealth, and had reſtored *Paganiſm* and the Worſhip of the *Gods*. But long before them we find *Nero* (the *firſt* Emperor that raiſed Perſecution againſt the *Chriſtians*, as *Tertullian* notes) ſo active in the Buſineſs, as to glory (or ſome Flatterers in his behalf) that he had done the Work; Witneſs an *Inſcription* found alſo in *Spain*.

Ibid. p. 238. *num.* 9.

NERONI CL. CAES.
AUG. PONT. MAX.

OB. PROVINC. LATRONIB.
ET HIS QUI NOVAM
GENERI HUM. SUPER-
STITION. INCULCAB.

PURGATAM.

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

This *Inſcription* was ſet up in Memory of his having *purged the Country of Robbers, and ſuch as had introduced and obtruded a new Superſtition upon Mankind.* The Chriſtians, it's true, are not particularly *named* in it (probably the *Gentiles* ſo much deteſted the very Name of *Chriſtian*, that eſpecially in publick Monuments they would not mention it) yet can it be meant of no other. For beſides that this Character of *inculcating* their Superſtition, admirably agrees to *Chriſtians*, who ſought by all means to *inſtill* their Principles into the Minds of Men; beſides that *Superſtition* was the common *Title* by which the *Gentiles* were wont to denote Chriſtianity; beſides

Ad An. Chriſti 69.

ſides this, there was not (as *Baronius* obſerves) Chap. 7.
y other *new* Religion at that Time, or long *before*
after, that appeared in the World; to be ſure,
ne that could be the Object of *Nero*'s Perſecution.
nd how he entertained this, *Tertullian* ſufficiently *Apol. c. 5.*
imates, bidding them ſearch their own *Records*, *p. 6.*
d they would find. And from this very *Inſcrip-*
n alone 'tis evident, they thought, that (at leaſt
that part of the World) they had wholly extir-
ted and rooted it out. By all which we may gueſs
hat hot Service the *Chriſtians* had on't under thoſe
imitive Perſecutions. Indeed their Sufferings were
yond all Imagination great, which yet did but ſo
uch the more exerciſe and advance their Patience;
e Bitterneſs of their Sufferings, making their Pa-
ence more eminent and illuſtrious. Of which,
at we may take the truer Meaſure, 'twill be neceſ-
y to conſider theſe two Things, the *Greatneſs* of
oſe *Torments* and Sufferings which the Chriſtians
nerally underwent; and then the *Manner* of their
arriage under them.

For the firſt, the Greatneſs of thoſe *Torments* and
fferings which they underwent, they were as bad
s the Wit and Malice of either *Men* or *Devils* could
vent; in the Conſideration whereof we ſhall firſt
ke a View of thoſe Puniſhments which were more
anding and *ordinary*, familiarly uſed amongſt the
reeks and *Romans*; and then of ſuch as were *extra-*
rdinarily made uſe of towards the Chriſtians. A-
ongſt their ordinary Methods of Execution, theſe
ix were moſt eminent; the *Croſs*, the *Rack*, the *Wheel*,
Burning, *Wild Beaſts*, *and Condemning to Mines*.

I. The Croſs deſerves the firſt place in our Ac-
ount, not only as having been one of the moſt *an-*
ient and *univerſal* Ways of Puniſhment amongſt the
Gentiles, and from them brought in amongſt the
ews; but as being the Inſtrument by which our
Bleſſed

Part II. Blessed *Saviour* himself was put to Death. Omitting the various and different Forms and Kinds of it, which were all used towards the Primitive Christians, I intend here only that which was most common, a straight Piece of Wood fixed in the Ground having a transverse Beam fastened near the Top of it, not unlike the Letter T, though probably it had also a piece of Wood arising above the top of it. And there were *two Things* in this way of Punishment, which rendered it very severe, the *Pain* and *Ignominy* of it. Painful it must needs be, because the Party suffering was fastned to it with *Nails* driven through his *Hands* and *Feet*, which being the Parts where the *Nerves* and *Sinews* terminate and meet together, must needs be most acutely sensible of Wounds and Violence. And because they were pierced only in these Parts so far distant from the *Vitals*, this made their Death very *lingring* and tedious, doubling and trebling every Pain upon them: Insomuch that some out of a generous Compassion have caused Malefactors first to be *strangled* before they were *crucified*; as *Julius Cæsar* did towards the *Pirates*, whom he had sworn to execute upon the Cross. But no such Favour was shewed to Christians; they were suffered to remain in the midst of all those exquisite Pangs, till mere Hunger starved them, or the Mercy of wild Beasts, or Birds of Prey dispatched them. Thus St. *Andrew* the Apostle continued *two whole* Days upon the Cross teaching the People all the while. *Timotheus* and his Wife *Maura*, after many other Torments, hung upon the Cross *nine Days* together, before they compleated their Martyrdom. Nor was the *Shame* of this way of suffering less than the Pain of it; Crucifixion being the *peculiar* Punishment of *Slaves*, *Traitors*, and the vilest *Malefactors*: Insomuch that for a *Freeman* to die thus was accounted the highest

Sueton. in vit. Cæsar. c. 74. p. 76.

Vid. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. 8. c. 8. p. 300.

Martyrol. Rom. ad diem 30. Nov. p. 736.

Ib. ad diem 3 Maii p. 272.

Vul. Gallic. in Avid. Cass. c. 4. p. 248.

Accent

Accent of Ignominy and Reproach: Therefore the *Roman Historian* calls it *servile Supplicium*, a Punishment proper to Slaves. Sometimes they were crucified with their Heads *downwards*: Thus St. *Peter* is said to have been crucified; thus those *Egyptian* Martyrs, who hung in this posture till they were starved out of the World. But this Punishment of the Cross, soon after the World was become Christian, *Constantine* took away out of Reverence to our *Saviour*, not being willing that that should be the *Punishment* of the vilest Malefactors, which had been the Instrument whereupon the Son of God had purchased *Salvation* for Mankind. Chap. 7.

Vid. Lact. de ver. sap. c. 26. p. 436. Euseb. l. 3. c. 1. & l. 8. ubi supra. Sozom. l. 1. c. 8. p. 412.

II. The Rack, called in Lation *Equuleus*, either from the Situationof the Offender's Body upon the Engine, resembling a Man on *Horseback*; or rather from the *horsing* or holding of him up to it by Ropes and Skrews. The first Design of it was to torment the Guilty, or the suspected Person, to make him *confess* the Truth: What the particular Form of it was, is not agreed amongst learned Men; but this we may probably conceive, That it was an Engine framed of several Pieces of Timber joined together, upon the Top whereof, upon a long *Board*, the suffering Person being laid upon his Back, and fastened to it by his Hands and Feet, the Engine was so contrived with Skrews and Pullies, that all his Members were *distended* with the utmost Violence, even to a *Luxation* of all the Parts; and this more or less, according to the Tormenters Pleasures. Sometimes they were hung by the Hands and Feet under the top-board of the Engine, and tormented in that posture. This Rack was a Punishment which the *Christians* were very frequently put to. Much of the same nature was that which they called the *Catasta*, being a Piece of Wood raised up like a little Scaffold, upon which Christians were set, that their Torments

Cic. pro Deiotar. p. 579. tom. 2 Vid. Gallon. de cruciat. martyr. c. 3.

Part II. Torments might be more conſpicuous; thence that Proverb in *Cyprian*, *Ad Pulpitum poſt Cataſtam venit*, ſpeaking of *Aurelius* a Confeſſor, who having been publickly tormented upon this Engine, was after ordained a *Reader* in the Church, and promoted to read the Scriptures out of the Pulpit, as he had lately confeſſed Chriſt upon the Scaffold. In this, as in that of the Rack, there were certain additional Torments made by Inſtruments, called *Ungulæ*; which were a Kind of *Iron Pincers*, made with ſharp Teeth, with which the Fleſh was by piece-meal pulled and torn off their Backs.

In the Time of Pope *Paul* the Third, one of theſe *Ungulæ*, as the Author of the *Roma Subterranea* tells us, was among other Things found in the *Vatican Cœmetery* amongſt the Monuments of the *Martyrs*, and laid up amongſt the other *Reliques* of that Church as an ineſtimable *Treaſure*, and a worthy Object of *religious* Worſhip; being there kept to be ſeen and *adored* by all Chriſtian People. And another of their Writers being about to deſcribe it, tells us, that though altogether *unworthy* of ſuch a *Favour*, yet he was bleſſed with the Sight of it; and that (as became him) he *kiſſed* and embraced it with great *Veneration*. Which by the way ſeems to me a little ſtrange, that it ſhould be accounted an *Honour* and a Kindneſs done to the *Martyrs*, to adore that which was the *Inſtrument* of their Torment. Might they not by the ſame reaſon as well worſhip their *Executioners*, and pay a religious Reſpect to the Aſhes of thoſe who dragged them to the Stake, tore off their Fleſh, and put them to death with all imaginable Pain and Torture?

Hæc Ungula in ſacrarum Sanctuario reliquiarum ejuſdem Baſilicæ, religioſo cultu, tanquam res, omni pretioſior auro, digniſſimè aſſervatur; & Chriſtianorum populo videnda ac veneranda proponitur. Rom. Subter. l. 2. c. 4. num. 16. p. 149. Gallon. ib. c. 5. p. 189.

III. The **Wheel**. This was a *round* Engine, to which the Body of the condemned Perſon being bound,

bound, was not only extremely distended, but *whirled* about with the most violent Distortion; the Pain whereof was unconceivable, especially as used towards the Primitive *Christians*: The Wheel, to which they were bound naked, being sometimes full of *Iron Pricks*, sometimes a Board full of sharp-pointed Iron Pricks being placed under it; so that every time the Body of the Martyr came to it, they racked off the Flesh with inexpressible Torment. Thus were served those three Martyrs, *Fælix* the Presbyter, *Fortunatus* and *Achilleus* the Deacons at *Valentia* in *France*, and hundreds more in other Places. Chap. 7. *Ep.* 33. *p.* 47. *Mart. Rom. ad diem April.* 23. *p.* 249.

IV. **Burning.** This was done sometimes by staking them down to a Pile of Wood, and setting it on Fire. Thus suffered *Julianus* and others, in the Persecution at *Alexandria*. Sometimes by laying them to roast at a slow gentle Fire, that they might die with the greater Torment. Otherwhiles they were hung up either by the Neck, Hands or Feet, and a Fire made under them, either to *burn* or *choke* them; or burning Torches held to several Parts of their *naked* Bodies. Sometimes they were placed in an *Iron Chair*, or laid upon an *Iron Grate*, which was either made *red-hot*, or had a Fire continually burning under it. Of all which ways of Execution, and some other near a-kin to them, were it not too tedious, I could easily give abundant Instances. This was accounted one of the *prime* ways of *capital* Punishments, and none were adjudged to it but the greatest *Villains*, the *meanest* and vilest Persons. *Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l.* 6. *c.* 4. *p.* 238. *L.* 28. *Præf. & sect.* 11. *ff. de pœnis. Leg.* 3. *sect.* 5. *ff. l.* 48. *tit.* 8. *ad leg. Corn. de Sicar. & ven.*

V. **Throwing to wild Beasts.** This was a Punishment very common amongst the *Romans*, to condemn a Man to fight for his Life with the most savage Beasts, *Bears*, *Leopards*, *Lions*, &c. and was usually the Portion of the *vilest* and most despicable Offenders; under which Notion the *Gentiles* looking upon the *Christians*, did most commonly condemn

Part II. demn them to this Kind of Death; a thing so familiar, that it became in a manner *proverbial*, *Christianos ad Leones*, Away with the *Christians* to the *Lions*. And that they were many *times* tied down to a *Stake*; sometimes cloathed in *Beasts Skins*, the more eagerly to provoke the Rage and Fury of the wild Beasts against them.

Tert. Ap. c. 40.

VI. **Condemning to the Mines.** To this the *Romans* adjudged their *Slaves*, and the most infamous Male actors; and to this too the Christians were often sent. What their *Treatment* was in those Places, besides their continual Toil and Drudgery, *Cyprian* lets us know in a Letter to *Nemesian*, and the rest that labour'd in the *Mines*, *viz.* That they were cruelly *beaten* with Clubs, *bound* with Chains, forced to lie upon the hard, cold, damp Ground; conflicted with *Hunger*, *Nakedness*, the *Deformity* of their Heads half *shaved*, after the manner of Slaves, and forced to live in the Midst of Filth and Nastiness. Besides which, they were wont to be *marked* and branded in the Face, to have their *right Eye* pulled out, and their *left Foot* disabled by cutting the *Nerves* and Sinews of it: Not to say, that being once under this Condemnation, all their *Estate* was forfeited to the publick Treasury, and themselves for ever reduced into the Condition of *Slaves*. These were some of the more usual Ways of Punishment amongst the *Romans*, though exercised towards the Christians in their utmost Rigour and Severity. I omit to speak of Christians being *scourged* and whipped even to the Tiring of their Executioners, especially with Rods called *Plumbatæ* (whereof there is frequent mention in the *Theodosian Code*) which were Scourges made of Cords or Thongs, with *leaden* Bullets at the End of them; of their being stoned to Death, their being beheaded, their being thrust into stinking and nasty

Ep. 77. p. 155.

Vid. Leg. 8. Sect. 4. ff. qui test. fac. possunt.

nasty Prisons, where they were set in a Kind of Stocks with five Holes, their Legs being stretched asunder, to reach from one End to the other. Chap 7.

We shall now consider some few of those *unusual* Torments and Punishments which were inflicted only upon Christians, or (if upon any others) only in extraordinary Cases. Such was their being *tied* to Arms of Trees, bent by great Force and Strength by certain Engines, and being suddenly let go, did in a Moment tear the Martyr in Pieces; in which way many were put to death in the Persecution at *Thebais*. Sometimes they were clad with *Coats* of Paper, Linnen, or such like, dawbed in the Inside with Pitch and Brimstone; which being set on fire, they were burnt alive. Other whiles they were shut into the Belly of a *brazen* Bull, and a Fire being kindled under it, were consumed with a Torment beyond Imagination. Sometimes they were put into a great Pot or *Caldron* full of *boiling* Pitch, Oil, Lead, or Wax mixed together; or had these fatal Liquors, by Holes made on purpose, poured into their *Bowels*. Some of them were hung up by one or both Hands, with Stones of great Weight tied to their Feet, to augment their Sufferings. Others were *anointed* all over their Bodies with Honey, and at Mid-day fastned to the Top of a Pole, that they might be a Prey to the Flies, Wasps, and such little Cattel, as might by degrees sting and torment them to Death. Thus, besides many others, it was with *Marcus* Bishop of *Arethusa*, a venerable old Man, who suffered under *Julian* the Apostate; after infinite other Tortures, they dawbed him over with Honey and Jellies, and in a Basket fastned to the Top of a Pole, exposed him to the *hottest* Beams of the Sun, and to the Fury of such little *Insects* as would be sure to prey upon him. Sometimes they were put into a *rotten Ship*, which being turned

Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 8. c. 9. p. 300.

Naz. Or. 1. in Jul. p. 89.

Part II. out to Sea, was *ſet on Fire*. Thus they ſerved an orthodox *Presbyter* under *Valens* the *Arian* Emperor; the ſame which *Socrates* reports of fourſcore pious and devout Men, who by the ſame Emperor's Command, were thruſt into a Ship, which being brought into open Sea, was preſently fired, that ſo by this Means they might alſo want the Honour of a Burial. And indeed the Rage and Cruelty of the *Gentiles* did not only reach the Chriſtians while *alive*, but extended to them after *Death*, denying them (what has been otherwiſe granted among the moſt *barbarous* People) the Conveniency of Burial, expoſing them to the Ravage and Fierceneſs of *Dogs* and *Beaſts* of Prey; a Thing which, we are told, the Primitive *Chriſtians* reckoned as not the leaſt Aggravation of their Sufferings. Nay, where they had been quietly buried, they were not ſuffered many times (as *Tertullian* complains) to enjoy the *Aſylum* of the Grave, but were plucked, cut, rent, and torn in Pieces.

Id. Or. 20. *p.* 416. *l.* 4. *c.* 16. *p.* 227.

Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 4. *c.* 1. *p.* 165. *& de Martyr Pal. c.* 9. *p.* 334. *Ap.* 37. *p.* 30.

But to what purpoſe is it any longer to inſiſt upon theſe Things? Sooner may a Man tell the Stars, than reckon up all thoſe Methods of Miſery and Suffering which the *Chriſtians* endured. *Euſebius*, who himſelf was a ſad Spectator of ſome of the later Perſecutions, profeſſes to give over the Account, as a Thing beyond all Poſſibility of Expreſſion; the Manner of their Sufferings, and the Perſons that ſuffered, being hard, nay, impoſſible to be reckoned up. The Truth is, (as he there obſerves, and *Cyprian* plainly tells *Demetrian* of it) their Enemies did little elſe but ſet their Wits upon the Tenters, to find out the moſt *exquiſite* Methods of Torture and Puniſhment. They were not content with thoſe old Ways of Torment which their Forefathers had brought in, but by an ingenious Cruelty daily invented new; ſtriving to excel one another in this Piece of helliſh Art, and accounting thoſe the wittieſt

Lib. 8. *c.* 12. *p.* 307.

Cypr. ad Demetr. p. 200.

tiest Persons that could invent the bittereſt and moſt barbarous Engines of Execution; and in this they improved ſo much, that *Ulpian*, *Maſter of Records* to *Alexander Severus* the Emperor, and the great *Oracle* of thoſe Times for Law, writing ſeveral Books *De Officio Proconſulis* (many Parcels whereof are yet extant in the Body of the *Civil Law*) in the *ſeventh* Book collected together the ſeveral bloody *Edicts* which the Emperors had put out againſt the *Chriſtians*; that he might ſhew by what Ways and Methods they ought to be puniſhed and deſtroyed, as *Lactantius* tells us. But this Book (as to what concerned *Chriſtians*) is not now extant, the Zeal and Piety of the firſt *Chriſtian* Emperors having baniſhed all Books of that Nature out of the World; as appears by a Law of the Emperor *Theodoſius*, where he commands the Writings of *Porphyry*, and all others that had written againſt the *Chriſtian Religion*, to be burned; the Reaſon why we have no more Books of the Heathens concerning the *Chriſtians* extant at this Day. Chap. 7.

De juſtit. l. 5. c. 11. p. 491.

L. 3. C. de Sum. Trin. ſect. 2.

Having given this brief *Specimen* of ſome few of thoſe grievous Torments to which the Primitive *Chriſtians* were expoſed, (they that would have more, muſt read the *Martyrologies* of the Church, or ſuch as have purpoſely written on this Subject.) we come next to conſider what was their *Behaviour* and *Carriage* under them. This we ſhall find to have been moſt *ſedate* and *calm*, moſt conſtant and reſolute; they neither *fainted* nor *fretted*; neither railed at their Enemies, nor ſunk under their Hands; but bore up under the heavieſt Torments, under the bittereſt Reproaches, with a Meekneſs and Patience that was invincible, and ſuch as every way became the mild, and yet generous Spirit of the Goſpel. So *Juſtin Martyr* tells the *Jews*; We patiently bear (ſays he) all the Miſchiefs which are brought

Dial. cum Tryph. p. 236.

Part II. brought upon us either by Men or Devils, even to the Extremities of Death and Torments, praying for those that thus treat us, that they may find Mercy, not desiring to hurt, or revenge our selves upon any that injure us, according as our great *Lawgiver* has commanded us. Thus *Eusebius*, reporting the hard Usage which the *Christians* met with during the Times of Persecution, tells us, That they were betrayed and butchered by their own Friends and Brethren; but they, as couragious Champions of the true Religion, accustomed to prefer an honourable *Death*, in Defence of the Truth, before *Life* it self, little regarded the cruel Usage they met with in it: But rather, as became true Soldiers of God, *armed* with Patience, they laughed at all Methods of Execution, Fire and Sword, and the Piercing of Nails, wild Beasts, and the Bottom of the Sea, Cutting and Burning of Limbs, Putting out Eyes, and Mutilation of the whole Body, Hunger, and Digging in Mines, Chains and Fetters; all which, for the great Love that they had to their *Lord* and *Master*, they accounted *sweeter* than any Happiness or Pleasure whatsoever. Nay, the very *Women* in this Case were as couragious as the *Men*, many of whom, undergoing the same Conflicts, reaped the same Rewards of their Constancy and Vertue. But this will more distinctly appear in a few particular Cases.

Orat. de Laud. Const. c. 7. p. 622.

First, Whenever they were sought for, in order to their being condemned and executed, they cared not to make use of *Opportunities* to escape. *Polycarp*, at his Apprehension, refused to fly; tho' going but into the next House he might have saved his Life. *Cyprian* writing to the Confessors, commends them, that when they were oft desired (I suppose he means by their *Gentile* Friends and Relations) to go out of Prison, they chose rather to abide there still, than to make their own Escape; telling them, they

Epist. ad Mosen & Max. Ep. 5. p. 28.

they had made as many Confessions, as they had had Opportunities to be gone, and had rejected them. Though (it's true) he himself withdrew from *Carthage* when the Officers were sent to take him and carry him to *Utica*, yet he did it (as he tells his People) by the Advice of some Friends; but for this Reason, that when he did suffer, he might suffer at *Carthage*, whereof he was Bishop; and that those Truths which he had preached to them in his Life, he might *seal* before them with his *Blood*: a Thing he earnestly and daily begged of God, and which was granted to him afterwards. And if they did not run away from Suffering, much less did they *oppose* it, and make Tumults and Parties to defend themselves; no, they were led as *Lambs to the Slaughter, and as Sheep before the Shearers are dumb, so opened not they their Mouth, but committed their Cause to him that judges righteously*, and who has said, *Vengeance is mine, and I will repay it.* None of us (says *Cyprian* to the Governour) when apprehended, makes Resistance, nor (though our Party be large and numerous) revenges himself for that unjust Violence that you offer to us. We patiently acquiesce in the Assurance of a future Vengeance; the *Innocent* truckle under the *Unrighteous*; the *Guiltless* quietly submit to Pains and Tortures; knowing for certain, that whatever we now suffer shall not remain unpunished; and that the greater the Injury is, that is done us in these Persecutions we endure, the more just and heavy will be that Vengeance that will follow it. Never was any wicked Attempt made against Christians, but a Divine *Vengeance* was soon at the heels of it. But though they thus resolutely stood to it, when the Honour of their Religion lay at stake; yet it must not be denied, that in some Cases they held it lawful and convenient to *fly* in Times of Persecution. *Tertullian*, indeed, in a Book purposely

Chap. 7.

Ep. 83. *p.* 161.

Ad Demetrian. p. 202.

Lib. de fug. in persecut.

Part II. poſely written on this Subject, maintains it to be ſimply and abſolutely unlawful for *Chriſtians* to fly at ſuch a Time; an Aſſertion which with all the Subtilties of his Wit, and the Flouriſhes of his *African* Eloquence, he endeavours to render fair and plauſible. But beſides the Strictneſs and rigid Severity of the Man at all times, this Book was compoſed after his complying with the Sect of the *Montaniſts*, whoſe peculiar Humour it was to out-do the *Orthodox* by overſtraining the Auſterities of Religion; as appears not only in this, but in the Caſe of *Marriages*, *Faſts*, *Penances*, and ſuch like. Otherwiſe, before his eſpouſing thoſe Opinions, he ſeems elſewhere to ſpeak more favourably of ſhunning Perſecution. But whatever he thought in the Caſe, 'tis certain the Generality of the Fathers were of another Mind, That Chriſtians might, and ought to uſe Prudence in this Affair, and at ſome times withdraw, to avoid the Storm when it was a coming, eſpecially in theſe two Caſes:

Depatient. c. 13. p. 147.

I. When Perſons were of more than ordinary *Uſe* and Eminency, the ſaving of whom might be of great Advantage to the Church. A Chriſtian that flies in this Caſe (as *Origen* tells *Celſus*) does it not for Fear, but in a prudent Compliance with his *Lord's* Direction, and with a Deſign to keep himſelf undefiled, that he may be able to miniſter to the Salvation of others. Thus St. *Paul* was let down the Wall in a *Basket*, when the Governour of *Damaſcus* ſought his Life. Thus *Cyprian* withdrew from *Carthage*, and lay hid for two Years together, during which time he gave ſecret Orders for governing of the Church. Thus *Athanaſius*, when *Syrianus* and his Soldiers broke into the Church to apprehend him, was by the univerſal Cry both of Clergy and People perſuaded, and in a Manner forced to retire and ſave himſelf; in which Retirement he continued ſo long, that the *Arians* charged him

Lib. 8. p. 406.

Athan. Apol. de fug. ſua, tom. 1. p. 545.

him with Fear and Cowardice; insomuch, that for his own Vindication he was forced to write an *Apology* for himself, wherein he learnedly and eloquently discourses the whole Affair, justifying himself from the Instances in the Old Testament, of *Jacob*, *Moses*, *David*, *Elias*; from the Example of *Christ* himself, and his Apostles, in the New; from the plain and positive Allowance of the Gospel, *When they persecute you in one City, flee unto another*; and that *when they should see the Abomination of Desolation standing in the holy Place* (*i. e.* the Miseries that were to come upon *Jerusalem* by the *Roman* Army) *they should flee unto the Mountains*; *and if upon the House-top, or in the Field, not turn back to fetch any Thing that was left behind*: That 'twas necessary for the Apostles to shun the Storm, because they were the *Instruments* immediately deputed to propagate and convey the Gospel to the World: That they were herein imitated by the Primitive Saints and Martyrs, *who wandered about in Deserts and Mountains, and in Dens and Caves of the Earth*; being equally careful to avoid the two Extreams, of *Rashness* and *Cowardice*, they would neither *thrust* themselves upon Danger, nor *basely run* from *Death*, when called to it; like wise *Physicians*, reserving themselves for the Use of those that needed their Assistance. All which, and a great deal more, he rationally argues in that *Apology*. Chap. 7.

II. Another Case wherein they accounted it lawful for Persons to retire from Persecutions, was, when being but *new* Converts, and as yet *weak* in the Faith, they looked upon them as not likely to bear the Shock and Brunt of the Persecution; in this Case they thought it better for them to *withdraw* for the present, than to put them under a Temptation of being drawn back to Paganism and Idolatry. Thus when *Gregory* Bishop of *Neocæsarea*, saw the *Decian* Persecution grow extreme hot and violent, *Nyssen. Orat. de vit. Gregor. Thaumat. p.* 1001. *tom.* 2.

Part II. considering the Frailty and Infirmity of Human Nature, and how few would be able to bear up under those fierce Conflicts that must be undergone for the Sake of Religion, perſuaded his Church for a little to decline that dreadful and terrible Storm; telling them, 'Twas a great deal better to *ſave* their Souls by flying, than by abiding thoſe furious Trials, to run the Hazard of *falling* from the Faith. And that his Counſel might make the deeper Impreſſion upon them, and he might convince them that in thus doing, there was no Danger or Prejudice to their Souls, he reſolved to ſhew them the Way by his own *Example*; and himſelf firſt retiring out of the Reach of Danger, retreated to the mountainous Parts thereabouts, that were freeſt from the Rage and Malice of the Enemy. Nor was this any *Impeachment* of their Zeal and Readineſs for Suffering, but only a prudent gaining a little Reſpite for a time, that they might ſuffer with greater Advantage afterwards. They did not deſire to ſave their Heads, when the Honour of their Religion called for it, nor ever by indirect Means skrewed themſelves out of Danger, when once engaged in it; though they did ſometimes prudently prevent it, reſerving themſelves for a more convenient Seaſon. Thus *Cyprian* withdrew a little, not out of Fear of Suffering, but a Deſire to prevent his being put to Death in an *obſcure* Place (which his Enemies had deſigned) being deſirous his Martyrdom ſhould happen in that Place where he ſo long lived, and ſo publickly preached the *Chriſtian Faith*.

Secondly, They were ſo far from declining Sufferings, and being terrified with thoſe Miſeries which they ſaw others undergo, that they freely, and in great Multitudes *offered* themſelves to the Rage and Fury of their Enemies; embracing Death as the greateſt *Honour* that could be done them: They ſtrove (as

Sulpitius

Sulpitius *Severus* obſerves, ſpeaking of the ninth Perſecution) which ſhould ruſh firſt upon thoſe glorious Conflicts; Men in thoſe Days (as he adds) much more greedily ſeeking *Martyrdom* in the Cauſe of *Chriſt*, than in After-times they did for *Biſhopricks* and the Preferments of the Church. *Lucian*, who certainly had very little Love to Chriſtians, yet gives this Account of them: The miſerable Wretches (ſays he, οἱ κακοδαίμονες) do verily perſuade them, *i. e.* thoſe of their own Party, that they ſhall ſurely be *immortal* and live for ever; upon which account they *deſpiſe* Death, and many of them voluntarily offer themſelves to it. Indeed they did ambitiouſly contend who ſhould be firſt crowned with Martyrdom, and that in ſuch Multitudes, that their Enemies knew not what to do with them, their very Perſecutors grew weary of their bloody Offices. *Tiberianus*, the Preſident of *Paleſtine*, in his Relation to the Emperor *Trajan* (recorded by *Joannes Malela*, mentioned alſo by *Suidas*) gives this Account of his Proceedings againſt them: *I am quite tired out in puniſhing and deſtroying the* Galileans *(called here by the name of* Chriſtians*) according to your Commands, and yet they* ceaſe not *to offer themſelves to be ſlain: Nay, though I have laboured both by fair Means and Threatnings to make them conceal themſelves from being known to be Chriſtians, yet can I not ſtave them off from Perſecution.* So little regard had they to Sufferings; nay, ſo impatient were they till they were in the Midſt of Flames! This made *Arrius Antonius* the Proconſul of *Aſia*, when at firſt he ſeverely perſecuted the Chriſtians, whereupon all the Chriſtians in that City like an *Army*, voluntarily preſented themſelves before his Tribunal, to be ſurprized with wonder; and cauſing only ſome few of them to be executed, he cried out to the Reſt, *O unhappy People! if you have a mind to die, have you not Halters and Precipices enough*

Chap. 7.

Sac. Hiſt. lib. 2. p. 143.

De Mort. Peregr. tom. 2. p. 793.

Apud Uſſer, Appen. Ignat. p. 9. ex Jo. Malel. Chron. lib. 11. vid. Annot. in Ep. ad. Philad. not. 82. in verb. Τεραύος.

Tertul. ad Scap. c. 4. p. 71.

to

Part II. *to end your Lives, but you must come hither for an Execution?* So fast did they flock to the Place of Torment, faster than *Droves* of Beasts that are driven to the Shambles! They even longed to be in the Arms of Suffering. *Ignatius*, though then in his Journey to *Rome* in order to his Execution, yet by the way as he went could not but vent his passionate Desire of it. O that I might come to those *wild Beasts* that are prepared for me! I heartily wish that I may presently meet with them; I would invite and encourage them *speedily* to devour me, and not be afraid to set upon me as they have been to others; nay, should they refuse it, I would even *force* them to it: I am concerned for nothing either *seen* or *unseen*, more than to enjoy *Jesus Christ*: Let *Fire* and the *Cross*, and the Rage of *wild Beasts*, the Breaking of *Bones*, *Distortion* of Members, *Bruising* of the whole Body; yea, all the Punishments which the *Devil* can invent, come upon me, so as I may but enjoy *Christ*. They even envied the Martyrdom of others, and mourned that any went before, while they were left behind. When *Laurentius* the Deacon espied *Sixtus* the Bishop of *Rome* going to his Martyrdom, he burst into Tears, and passionately called out, Whither, O my *Father*, art thou going without thy *Son?* Whither so fast, O Holy Bishop, without thy *Deacon?* Never didest thou use to offer Spiritual *Sacrifice* without thy *Minister* to attend thee. What have I done that might displease thee? Hast thou found me *degenerous* and fearful? Make Trial at least, whether thou hast chosen a fit Minister to wait upon thee. To this, and more to the same import, the good Bishop replied: Mistake not, *my Son*, I do not leave thee nor *forsake* thee; greater Tryals belong to *thee*: I, like a weak old Man, receive only the first Skirmishes of the Battel; but thou being youthful and valiant, hast a more glorious Triumph over the Enemy *reserved*

Euseb. H. E. lib. 3. c. 36. p. 107.

Ambr. offic. lib. 1. c. 42. tom. 1. p. 26.

ſerved for thee : Ceaſe to weep, thy Turn will be preſently ; for within *three Days* ſhalt thou follow me. So pious a Contention was there between theſe good Men, which of them ſhould firſt ſuffer for the Name of Chriſt ! 'Tis memorable, what we find concerning *Origen*, though then but a Youth, That when a great Perſecution was raiſed at *Alexandria*, wherein many ſuffered, he was ſo eagerly inflamed with a Deſire of Martyrdom (eſpecially after his Father had been ſeized upon and caſt into Priſon) that he expoſed himſelf to all Dangers, and courted Torments to come upon him ; and had certainly ſuffered, if his Mother, after all other Intreaties and Perſuaſions to no purpoſe, had not ſtolen away his *Clothes* by Night, and for mere Shame forced him to ſtay at home. Chap. 7. *Euſeb. H. Eccl. lib. 6. c. 2. p. 202.*

To theſe I ſhall add but one Example of the weaker Sex. When *Valens*, the *Arian* Emperor, (who perſecuted the *Orthodox* with as much Fury and Bitterneſs as any of the Heathen Emperors) came to *Edeſſa*, and found there great Numbers of them daily meeting in their publick Aſſemblies, he ſeverely checked the Governour, and commanded him by all Means to rout and ruin them. The Governour, though of another Perſuaſion, yet out of common Compaſſion, gave them *private* Notice of the Emperor's Commands, hoping they would forbear. But they not at all terrified with the News, met the next Morning in greater Numbers, which the Governour underſtanding, went to the Place of their Aſſembly: As he was going, a Woman in a careleſs Dreſs, leading a little Child in her Hand, ruſhed through the Governour's *Guard* ; who commanding her to be brought before him, asked her, Why ſhe made ſo much *haſte ?* That I may the *ſooner* come (*ſaid ſhe*) to the Place where the People of the *Catholick* Church are met together. *Sozom. H. Eccl. lib. 6. c. 18. p. 660.*

Know-

Part II. Knoweſt thou not *(ſays he)* that the Governour will be there to day, and *kill* all whom he finds there? I know it well *(anſwered the Woman)* and therefore make ſo much haſte, leſt I come too late, and be deprived of the *Crown* of Martyrdom. And, being asked, Why ſhe carried her *little Son* along with her? She anſwered, That he alſo may *partake* of the common Sufferings, and ſhare in the ſame Rewards. The *Governour* admiring the Courage of the Woman, turned back to the *Palace*, and diſſuaded the Emperor from his cruel Reſolution, as what was neither *honourable* in it ſelf, nor would *conduce* to his Purpoſes and Deſigns.

Thirdly, When they were condemned, though it was by a moſt unjuſt Sentence, and to a moſt horrid Death, they were ſo far from raging or repining, that inſtead of bitter and tart Reflections, they *gave Thanks* to their Enemies for condemning them. A Chriſtian being condemned *(ſays Tertullian)* thanks his Judges, he takes it for a Favour to die for ſo good a Cauſe. That they perſecute us *(ſays Clemens* of *Alexandria)* it is not becauſe they find us to be *wicked*, but becauſe they think we wrong the World by being Chriſtians, and by teaching and perſwading others to be ſo: As for us, they do us no harm, Death does but the ſooner ſend us to God; if therefore we be wiſe, we ſhall thank them that are the Occaſion of our more ſpeedy Paſſage thither. And elſewhere he tells us of St. *Peter*, that ſeeing his Wife going towards Martyrdom, he exceedingly rejoiced that ſhe was called to ſo great an *Honour*, and that ſhe was now returning home; encouraging and exhorting of her, and calling her by her Name, bid her be mindful of the *Lord*. Such *(ſays he)* was the Wedlock of that bleſſed Couple, and their perfect Diſpoſition and Agreement in thoſe Things that were deareſt to them.

Apol. c. 46. *p.* 36.

Strom. lib. 4. *p.* 505.

Lib. 7. *p.* 736.

When

When *Lucius*, one of the Primitive Martyrs, was charged by *Urbicius*, the *Roman* Prefect, for being a Christian, only because he offered to speak in behalf of one that had very hard Measure, he immediately confessed it, and being forthwith condemned, he heartily thanked his Judge for it, that by this means he should be delivered from such unrighteous Governours, and be sooner sent home to his Heavenly Father. No joyfuller Message could be told them, than that they must die for the sake of Christ. Though we contend with all your Rage and Cruelty (as *Tertullian* tells the President *Scapula*) yet we freely offer our selves, and rejoice more when we are condemned, than when we are absolved and released by you. In despite of all the Malice of their Enemies, they accounted the *Instruments* of their Torment, the *Ensigns* of their Honour and their Happiness. When the Heathens reproached them for dying such an infamous Death as that of the *Cross*, and in derision stiled them *Sarminticii* and *Semaxii*, for being burnt upon a little Stake to which they were bound with *Twigs*; *Tertullian* answers for them, *This is the Habit of our Victory, this is the embroidered Garment of our Conquest, this the triumphant Chariot wherein we ride to Heaven.* When in Prison, they looked upon their *Chains* as their *Ornaments*; as adding a Beauty and Lustre to them, with which they were adorned against the Time of their Suffering, as the Bride is with Fringes of Gold, and variegated Ornaments against the Day of her Espousals. For this reason *Babylas* the Martyr commanded that the *Chains* which he had worn in Prison, should be buried with him, to shew that those things which seem most ignominious, are for the sake of Christ most splendid and honourable; imitating therein the great *Apostle*, who was so far from being ashamed of, that he took Pleasure in *Bonds, Chains, Reproaches,*

Chap. 7.

Just. Martyr. Apol. 1. *p.* 43.

Ad Scap. c. 1. *p.* 68.

Apol. c. 50. *p.* 39.

Euseb. H. Eccl. lib. 5. *c.* 1. *p.* 160. *C.*

Chrysost. l. de St. Babyl. tom. 1. *p.* 669.

Part II. *proaches, Persecutions, Distresses for Christ's sake*; professing to *glory in nothing but the Cross of Christ.*

Fourthly, Whenever they were actually under the bittereſt Torments, they never diſcovered the leaſt Sign of a *furious* or *impatient* Mind, but bore up with a Quietneſs and Compoſure which no Sufferings could overcome. *Cyprian*, exhorting the Martyrs to Courage and Conſtancy, tells them this of thoſe that had gone before them, That in the hotteſt Conflict they never ſtirred, but maintained their Ground with a *free* Confeſſion, an *unſhaken* Mind, a *Divine* Courage, deſtitute indeed of *external* Weapons, but armed with the *Shield* of *Faith*; in Torments they ſtood *ſtronger* than their Tormentors; their bruiſed and mangled Limbs proved too hard for the Inſtruments wherewith their Fleſh was racked and pulled from them; the Blows, though never ſo oft repeated, could not conquer their impregnable Faith, although they did not only ſlice and tear off the Fleſh, but rake into their very Bowels; and let out Blood enough to extinguiſh the Flames of Perſecution, and to *allay* the Heats of the Everlaſting Fire. And in another Place, ſpeaking of the Perſecution under *Decius* at *Rome*, he tells us, That the Adverſary did with an horrible Violence break in upon the *Camp* of *Chriſt*, but was repulſed with a Strength as great as that wherewith he came upon them: That then he craftily attempted the more rude and weak, and ſubtilly endeavoured to ſet upon them ſingly, hoping the eaſilier to circumvent them; but that he found them like a *well-compacted* Army, ſober and vigilant, and prepared for Battle: That they could *die*, but could not be *overcome*; yea, therefore *unconquerable*, becauſe not afraid to die; that they did not reſiſt thoſe that roſe up againſt them, being ready, not to kill them

Epiſt. 8. *p.* 19.

Ad Correl. Epiſt. 57. *p.* 91.

them that assaulted them, but to lay down their own Lives, and to lose their Blood, that they might make the more haste to get out of a cruel and malicious World. Indeed, so admirable was their Patience and Readiness to die, that their very *Enemies* stood amazed at it. When *Simeon*, the second Bishop of *Jerusalem*, and of our *Saviour's* Kindred according to the Flesh, had, by the Command of *Atticus* the Governour of *Syria*, been tortured with all the Arts of Cruelty for many Days together; he bore it with such Courage, that the *Proconsul* himself, and all that were present, greatly wondered, that a Man of an *Hundred and Twenty Years* of Age should be able to undergo so many Miseries and Torments. Of the Martyrs that suffered together with St. *Polycarp*, the Church of *Smyrna* gives this Account; That all that were present were astonished when they saw them whipped till the Cords made way to the *inmost* Veins and Arteries, till the *Bowels* and the most hidden Parts of the Body appeared. They were raked with Shells of Fishes, laid all along upon sharp-pointed Stakes driven into the Ground, exercised with all Sorts of Torments, und at last thrown to be devoured of Wild Beasts; all which they bore with a mighty Patience and Constancy: Nay (as we find it in the first Part of that *Epistle* contracted by *Eusebius*, but published at large by Bishop *Usher*) so great was their Patience and Magnanimity, that in all their Sufferings not any of them gave a *Sigh* or a *Groan*; the Holy Martyrs of Christ (*says the Epistle*) evidently shewing us, That during this sad Hour of Suffering they were *Strangers* to their own Bodies, or rather, that our *Lord* himself stood by them, and familarly conversed with them; and that being Partaker of his *Grace*, they made light of these *Temporal* Torments, and by one short Hour deli-

Chap. 7.

Euseb. l. 3. c. 32. p. 104.

Id. lib. 4. c. 15. p. 129.

Append. Ignatian. par. 2. p. 14.

Part. II. delivered themselves from *Eternal* Miseries. Th
Fire, which their Tormenters put to them, seeme
to them but *cool* and *little*, while they had it in the
Thoughts to avoid the everlasting and unextinguish
able *Flames* of another World; their Eyes bein
fixed upon those Rewards which are prepared fo
them *that endure to the End*, such *as neither Ear ha*
heard, nor Eye hath seen, nor hath it entered into th
Heart of Man to conceive; but which were shewn t
them by our *Lord*, as being now ready to go off fro
Mortality, and to enter upon the State of *Angels*.

Encom. in 40 Martyr. append. ad. oper. Greg. Thaum. p. 85.

Thus reasoned those Forty Martyrs in St. *Basi*
that suffered at *Sebastia* in *Armenia*, in the Reig
of *Licinius*, when the Governour, to contrive a new
Method of Torment, had commanded them t
stand *naked* all Night in cold frosty Weather (which
in those more *Northerly* Countries is extreme shar
and bitter, it being then the Depth of Winter, and
the *North* Wind blowing very fierce) in a *Pond* o
Water; they first gave Thanks to God that they
put off their *Cloaths* and their *Sins* together, and then
comforted one another by ballancing their *present*
Hardships with their *future* Hopes: Is the Weather
sharp? (said they) but *Paradise* is *comfortable* and de-
lightful: Is the *Frost* cold and bitter? The *Rest* that
remains is sweet and pleasant; let us but hold out
a *little*, and *Abraham*'s Bosom will refresh us; we
shall change this *one* Night for an *eternal* Age o
Happiness Let our *Feet glow* with very *Cold*, so as
they may for ever rejoice and triumph with Angels;
let our *Hands sink* down, so as we may have Liberty
to lift them up to God. How many of our Fellow-
Soldiers have lost their Lives to keep Faith to their
Temporal Prince? And should we be unfaithful to
the true *King* of Heaven? How many have justly
died for their Crimes and Villanies? And shall
we refuse, in the Cause of *Righteousness* and Reli-
gion?

gion? 'Tis but the *Flesh* that suffers, let us not spare it; since we must die, let us *die* that we may *live*. Thus generously did they bear up under this uncomfortable State; their ardent Desires of Heaven from within, extinguishing all Sense of Cold and Hardship from without. Nay, when, a little before, their Commander had set upon them both with Threatnings and Promises; assuring them, That if they would but *deny Christ*, they should make their own Terms for Riches and Honour; they told him, That he had laid his *Snares* at a wrong Door; that he could not give them what he endeavoured to *take* from them; nor could they close with his Offers, without being infinitely Losers by the Bargain; that it was to no Purpose to proffer a little of the World to them, who despised the Whole of it; that all these visible Advantages were nothing to what they had in Hope and Expectation; all the Beauty and Glory of Heaven and Earth not being comparable to that State of Blessedness, which is the *Portion* of the Righteous; the one being *short-lived* and transitory, the other *permanent* and perpetual; that they were Ambitious of no *Gift*, but the Crown of Righteousness, nor sought after any other *Glory* but what was *Heavenly*; that they *feared* no Torments but those of *Hell*, and that that Fire was truly terrible. As for those Punishments they inflicted, they accounted them but as the *Blows* of Children; and the ill Usage that their Bodies met with, the longer 'twas endured, the more Way it made for a *brighter* Crown. Such was the Temper, such the Support of these Christian Soldiers, these *true Champions* of the *Christian Faith!*

Chap. 7.

Ib. p. 81.

Indeed this Consideration was one of the greatest Cordials that kept up their Spirits under the saddest Sufferings, that they were assured of a Reward in Heaven. Amongst us (says *Cyprian*) there flourishes

Ad Demet. p. 202.

Part II. Strength of *Hope*, Firmneſs of *Faith*, a Mind *erect* amongſt the Ruins of a tottering Age, and immoveable *Vertue*, a *Patience* ſerene and cheerful, and a Soul always *ſecure* and certain of its *God*. As for Want or Danger, what are theſe to *Chriſtians*, to the Servants of God, whom *Paradiſe* invites, and the Favour and Plenty of the *Heavenly* Kingdom expects and waits for? They are always glad, and rejoice in God, and reſolutely bear the Evils and Miſeries of the World, while they look for the Rewards and Proſperities of another Life. The great *Philoſophers* (as *Euſebius* obſerves) as much as they talk of *Immortality*, yet by their Carriage they ſhewed, that they looked upon it but as a trifling and childiſh *Fable*: Whereas (ſays he) amongſt us, even *Girls* and *Children*, the moſt unlearned, and (meaſured by the Eye) the meaneſt and moſt deſpicable Perſons, being aſſiſted by the Help and Strength of our Bleſſed *Saviour*, do rather by their *Actions* than their *Words*, demonſtrate and make good this Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul. This *Julian* confeſſes of the *Chriſtians*, tho' according to his Cuſtom, he gives them bad Words, calls them *Atheiſts* and irreligious Perſons; that being acted by ſome evil Spirits, they perſuade themſelves, that Death is by all Means to be deſired, and that they ſhall immediately *fly* to Heaven, as ſoon as their Souls are freed from the *Fetters* of the Body. Hence it was, that in thoſe Times *Chriſtians* were wont to ſing *Hymns* and *Pſalms* at the *Funerals* of the Dead, to ſignify, that they had attained their *Reſt*, the End of their Labours, the Retribution of their Troubles, the Reward and the Crown of their Conflicts and Sufferings, as *Chryſoſtom* tells us; Part of which *Pſalms*, he elſewhere tells us, were, *Return unto thy Reſt, O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee:* and, *I will fear no Evil, becauſe thou*

Præpar. Evang. l. 1. c. 4. p. 13.

Fragm. ep. oper. part. 1. p. 528.

Hom. 51. de SS. Bern. & Proſd. Tom. 1. p. 563.

Hom. 4. ad Hebr. p. 1785.

thou art with me: and again, *Thou art my Refuge from the Trouble that compasses me about.* For the same Reason, as being a Sign of *Joy* and Chearfulness, he there tells us, that they carried *Lights* burning before the Corpse. By all which, he tells us, they signified, that they carried forth *Christians* as *Champions* to the Grave, glorifying God, and giving Thanks to him, that he had *crowned* the deceased Person, that he had delivered him from his Labours, that he had taken him to himself, and set him beyond the Reach of Storms and Fears. Chap. 7. *Psal.* 16. 1. *Psal* 24. 4. *Ib. p.* 1784.

But to return: There was scarce any one Instance of Religion, wherein Primitive Christianity did more openly *approve* it self to the World, and more evidently *insult* over *Paganism*, than the generous Courage and Patience of its Professors. By this they commended both the *Truth* and *Excellency* of their Religion, and conquered their very Enemies into an embracing of it. Hear how *Lactantius* pleads the Argument, and triumphs in the Goodness of his Cause; by reason (says he) of our strange and wonderful Courage and Strength, *new Additions* are made to us; for when the People see Men torn in Pieces with infinite Variety of Torments, and yet maintain a Patience *unconquerable*, and able to tire out its Tormenters; they begin to think (what the Truth is) that the *Consent* of so many, and the *Perseverance* of dying Persons cannot be in vain; nor that *Patience* it self, were it not from God, could hold out under such Racks and Tortures: *Thieves*, and Men of *robust* Body, are not able to bear such tearing in Pieces; they groan and cry out, and are overcome with Pain, because not endued with a Divine Patience; but our very *Children*, and *Women* (to say nothing of our *Men*) do with Silence *conquer* their Tormenters; nor can the hottest Fire force the least Groan from them. Let the *Romans* go now *De Justit. l.* 5. *c.* 13. *p.* 495.

Part. II. and boast of their *Mutius* and *Regulus*, of the one for delivering himself up to his Enemy, to be put to *Death*, because he was ashamed to *live* a Prisoner; of the other, for burning his Hand at the Command of the Enemy to save his Life. Behold! with us the *weaker* Sex, and the most *tender* Age can suffer all Parts of their Body to be torn and burnt; not out of *Necessity*, because they might not escape if they would, but out of *Choice*, because they believe in God. This is that true *Vertue* which Philosophers indeed vainly *boast* of, but never really *possessed*. This, and more to the same Purpose, that eloquent *Apologist* there urges, to the great Honour of his Religion. By the Force of such Arguments *Justin Martyr* confesses, That he was brought over from being a *Platonick* Philosopher to be a *Christian*: for when he saw the *Christians*, whom he had so often heard accused and traduced, undauntedly going to *die*, and embracing the most terrible Executions that were prepared for them; *I thought with my self* (says he) *that it was not possible such Persons should wallow in Vice and Luxury; it being the Interest of all wicked and voluptuous Persons to shun Death, to dissemble with Princes and Magistrates, and to do any Thing to save their Lives.*

Ap. 1. p. 50.

This certainly could not but be a huge Satisfaction to all prudent and considerate Men, that the *Christians* were guided by *better* Principles than ordinary, and that they were fully assured, that *theirs* was the *true* Religion, and that they taught nothing but what they firmly believed to be true. For to maintain such Patience and Constancy even unto Death (says *Origen*, speaking of the *Apostles* propagating the Doctrine of *Christ*) is not the *Fashion* of those who feign Things of their own Heads; but is a manifest Argument to all candid and ingenuous Readers, that they knew what they writ to be true, when

Adv. Celf. l. 2. p. 65.

when they so cheerfully endured so many, and such grievous Things, only for the Sake of the *Son of God*, in whom they had believed. No Dangers could affright them, no Threatnings or Torments could baffle them out of their Profession. Therefore when *Celsus* accused the *Christians* for a *fearful* Sort of Men, and such as loved their Carcasses well; *Origen* answers, No such Matter, *We can as cheerfully lay down our Bodies to suffer for Religion, as the hardiest Philosopher of you all can put off his Coat.* And indeed the Gospel did mightily prosper and triumph in the Midst of these dreadful Sufferings; Men rationally concluding, that there must be something more than *Humane* in that Doctrine, for which so many thus deeply ventured. So *Tertullian* tells *Scapula*, in the Conclusion of his Book: *It is to no Purpose to think this Sect will fail, which you will see to be the more built up, the faster it is pulled down; for who is there, that beholding such eminent Patience, cannot but have some Scruples started in his Mind, and be desirous to enquire into the Cause of it; and when he ouce knows the Truth, be himself moved to close with it, and embrace it?* Therefore *Julian the Apostate*, out of a cursed Policy, refused many times openly to put the *Christians* to Death; partly because he envied them the *Honour* of being *Martyrs*, partly because he saw that they were like *new-mown Grass*, the *oftner* it was cut down the *thicker* it sprang up again.

Chap. 7.

Lib. 7. p. 357.

C. 1. p. 72.

Naz. in Jul Invect. 1. p. 72.

I shall add no more concerning this Subject, but the *Testimony* which the very *Enemies* of *Christians* gave them in this Case. *Julian* the Emperor (whom we so lately mentioned, and who fought against *Christians* with their own *Weapons*, making Use of those *Scriptures* which he had studied while he was amongst them) when the *Christians* complained to him of those Oppressions and Injuries which the Governours of *Provinces* laid upon them, made light

Niceph. Eccl. Hist. l. 10. c. 24. to. 2. p. 53.

Part II. of it, and dismissed them with this virulent Sarcasm; *Your Christ* (says he) *has given you a Law, that when you suffer unjustly, you should bear it resolutely, and when oppressed and injured, should not answer again.* And so certainly they did, undergoing all Kinds of Miseries, and Death it self, with so *unconcerned* a Mind, that elsewhere he censures them for this very Reason, to be acted by the *Spirit* of the *Devil*. Hence *Porphyry*, in a Book that he wrote against the *Christians*, calls their Religion τὸ βάρβαρον πάθημα, a Piece of *barbarous Boldness*: *Barbarous*, because so different from the way of Worship amongst the *Greeks*, with whom every Thing was barbarous that agreed not with their Principles and Institutions: *Boldness*, because the *Christians* shewed such an undaunted Courage in bearing Miseries and Torments, chusing to die a thousand times rather than to deny *Christ*, and sacrifice to the Gods. For this Reason, the Heathen in *M. Fælix* stiles the *Christians*, Men of an *undone, furious, and desperate Party*; respecting their fearless and resolute Carriage under Sufferings, for so he explains himself presently after: *Is it not a strange Folly, and an incredible Boldness? They despise Torments that are present, and yet fear those that are future and uncertain; and while they fear to die after Death, in the mean time they are not afraid to die. So sillily do they flatter themselves, and cajole their Fears by a deceitful Hope of some unknown Comforts that shall arise to them.* This, *Arrian*, in his Collection of *Epictetus*'s Dissertations, confesses to be true of those, whom (according to *Julian*'s Stile) he calls the *Galilæans*, that they underwent Torments and Death with a mighty Courage; but which he makes to be the Effect only of *Use*, and a customary bearing Sufferings. The Emperor *M. Antoninus* confesses also the Matter of Fact, That the *Christians* did thus readily and *resolutely* die, but ascribes it not to Judgement and a rational

Frag. Epist. loc. supra laudat.

Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 6. c. 19. p. 220.

M. Fæl. p. 7.

Lib. 4. c. 7. p. 500.

Τῶν εἰς ἑαυτὸν, *l. 11. sect. 3. p. 106.*

rational Consideration, but to *meer Stubbornness* and *Obstinacy*. And in an *Epistle* that he wrote to the *Common Council* of *Asia*, in Favour of the *Christians*, whom his Officers there did grievously vex and oppress, gives them this Testimony; That they could have no greater Kindness done them than to be called in Question, and that they had much rather be *put to Death* for their Religion, than to have their *Lives* spared to them: By which Means they became Conquerors, chusing rather to part with their Lives, than to do what you impose upon them. Let me advise you (says he) who are ready to despond with every *Earthquake* that happens to you, to compare your selves with them: They in all their Dangers are securely confident in their God; while you at such a time *neglect* the Gods, and have little or no Regard either to other Rites, or to the Worship of that immortal Deity, but banish the *Christians* that worship him, and persecute them unto Death. So forcibly did the Majesty of *Truth* extort a Confession from its greatest Enemies.

Chap. 7.

Apud Eus. Hist. Eccl Lib. 4. c 13. p. 126.

The End of the Second Part.

Primitive Christianity:

OR THE

RELIGION

OF THE

Ancient Christians,

IN THE

First AGES of the GOSPEL.

PART III.

Of their Religion as respecting other Men.

CHAP. I.

Of their Justice and Honesty.

Christian Religion admirably provides for Moral Righteousness. Do as you would be done by, *the great Law of Christ: This Rule highly prized by* Severus *the Emperor. The first Christians accounted Honesty and an upright Carriage a main Part of their Religion. Their Candour and Simplicity in their Words; abhorring Lyes and Mental*

tal Reservations, though it might save their Lives. Their Veracity such, as no need to be put to their Oaths. Some few of the Fathers against all Swearing: Allowed by the greatest Part in weighty Cases. That they took Oaths, proved from Athanasius, *and their taking the* Sacramentum Militare. *The Form of the Oath out of* Vegetius. *The same expressly affirmed of the more antient Christians by* Tertullian. *Why refusing to swear by the Emperor's* Genius. *Oaths wont to be taken at the Holy Sacrament upon the Communion-Table, or the Holy* Gospels. *Some against all Oaths, only to prevent a Possibility of Perjury. Bearing false Witness, condemned and strictly punished by the antient Church. A famous Instance of Divine Vengeance pursuing three false Accusers. Christians careful in the Conduct of their Actions. Their Integrity in Matters of Distributive Justice; in Commutative Justice, avoiding all Fraud and Overreaching. St.* Augustine's *Instance.* Nicostratus *forced to fly, to avoid the Punishment of Cheating and Sacrilege. The Christians unjustly accused of Sacrilege by the Heathens. The Occasion of it.* Pliny's *Testimony of the Honesty of Christians. Theft and Rapine severely condemned. Christians for Doing all the Good they could. Their Care to right and relieve the Oppressed. The* Gentiles *charged Christians with Murder, and Eating Man's Flesh. A brief Representation of the several Answers returned to it by the Christian Apologists. The true Rise*

of

of the Charge found to spring from the barbarous and inhuman Practices of the Gnosticks, *mentioned by* Irenæus *and* Epiphanius. Chap. 1.

HAving given some Account of the Religion of the ancient *Christians*, both as it respected their *Piety* towards God, and their sober and vertuous *Carriage* towards *themselves*; we come in the last place to consider it in reference to their *Carriage* towards *others*, which the *Apostle* describes under the Title of *Righteousness*: Under which he comprehends all that Duty and Respect wherein we stand obliged to others; whereof we shall consider these following Instances: Their *Justice* and *Integrity* in Matters of Commerce and Traffick; their *mutual Love* and *Charity* to one another; their *Unity* and *Peaceableness*; and their *Submission* and *Subjection* to *Civil* Government.

I begin with the first, their **Just and Upright Carriage** in their *outward Dealings*. One great Design of the *Christian* Law, is to establish and ratify that great *Principle*, which is one of the *prime* and *fundamental* Laws of Nature, *To hurt no Man*, and *to render to every one his due*; to teach us to carry ourselves as becomes us in our Relations towards Men. Next to our Duty towards *God*, the Gospel obliges us to be *Righteous to Men*, sincere and upright in all our Dealings, *not going beyond, nor defrauding one another in any Matter*; *to put away Lying, and to speak Truth to each other as Fellow-Members* of the same Christian Brother-hood and Society. It settles that *Golden Rule* as the Fundamental Law of all just and equitable Commerce, *That all things whatsoever we would that Men should do to us, we should even do so to them, this being the Sum of the Law and the Prophets*; than which, as no Rule could have been more

Part III. more *equitable* in it self, so none could possib
have been contrived more short and plain, and mo
accommodate to the common Cases of Human Li
Upon the account of these, and such like excelle
Lamprid. in vit. Alex. Sev. c. 43. p. 568. Precepts, *Alexander Severus*, the *Roman* Empere
had so great an Honour for our *Saviour*, that he w
resolved to build a *Temple* to him, and to receive hi
into the Number of their *Gods*: And though he w
over-ruled in this by some, who having consulted t
Oracle, told him, That if it were done, all Me
would become *Christians*, and the Temples of t
Gods would be left naked and empty; yet in h
Ibid. c. 29. p. 540. most private *Chappel*, he had the *Image* of *Christ*,
mongst those of many noble *Heroes*, and *deified* Pe
sons, to whom he paid religious Adoration eve
Morning; and particularly for this Precept, *Th
what we would not have done to our selves, we shou
Ibid. c. 51. p. 577. not do to others* (which his own *Historian* co
fesses he learned either from the *Jews* or *Christians*
but most certainly from the *Christians*, in who
Mouths it so often was, and in whose *Gospel* it w
so plainly written.) He so highly valued it, that i
all publick Punishments he caused it to be proclai
ed by a Common *Cryer*; nay, was so hugely fon
on't, that he caused it to be written upon the *Wa*
of his Palace, and upon all his publick *Buildings*
that, if possible, every Room in his Court, and eve
Place in the City, might be a silent *Chancery* a
Court of Equity.

So vast a Reverence had the very *Enemies* of Chr
stianity for the *Gospel* upon this account, that it so a
mirably provides for the Advance of Civil Righteou
ness and Justice amongst Men; which, however
has been slighted by some, even amongst *Christian*
under the Notion of *Moral* Principles, yet witho
it all other *Religion is but vain*; it being a strang
piece of Folly, for any to dream of being *Godly* with
ou

Chap. 1.

t being honeſt; or to think of being a *Diſciple* of e firſt, while a Man is an *Enemy* to the ſecond Ta- e. Sure I am, the *Chriſtians* of old looked upon oneſty and an upright Carriage, as a conſiderable art of their Religion; and that to ſpeak *Truth*, to eep their *Words*, to perform *Oaths* and *Promiſes*, to t ſincerely in all their *Dealings*, was as ſacred and dear to them as their Lives and Beings. *Speech* eing the great Inſtrument of mutual Commerce and raffick, ſhall be the firſt Inſtance of their Integrity. hey ever uſed the greateſt Candour and Simplicity n expreſſing their Mind to one another, not pre- ending what was *falſe*, nor concealing what was rue; *yea, yea*, and *nay, nay*, was the uſual Meaſure of heir Tranſactions: A *Lye* they abhorred as *bad* in ll, as *monſtrous* in a *Chriſtian*, as directly oppoſite to hat *Truth*, to which they had conſigned and deli- ered up themſelves in Baptiſm, and therefore would ot tell one, tho' it were to ſave their Lives. When he Heathens charged them with Folly and Madneſs hat they would ſo reſolutely ſuffer, when a Parcel of air Words might make way for them to eſcape; elling them, 'Twas but doing or ſaying as they were bid, and that they might ſecure their Conſciences y *mental* Reſervations: *Tertullian* lets them know, hat they rejected the Motion with the higheſt Scorn, s the plain Artifice and Invention of the *Devil*. When we are moſt ſeverely examined (ſays *Juſtin Martyr*) we never *deny* ourſelves; counting it *impious* in any hing to diſſemble or deny the Truth, as we know he contrary is acceptable unto God: And though we could (as they told the *Emperors*) when queſtioned *evade* or *deny* it, yet we ſcorn to live upon any Terms, by which we muſt be forced to maintain our Lives by *Lies* and *Falſhood*.

Tert. Apol. c. 27. p. 26.

Apol. 1. p. 43.

Ib. Apol. 2. p. 57.

This honeſt and ingenuous Simplicity they practiſed to that Exactneſs and Accuracy, that for a *Chriſtian*

Part III. ſtian to be put to his *Oath*, was accounted a Di-
paragement to his *Fidelity* and Truth. So Cl
Stromat. lib. 7. p. 728. mens *Alexandrinus* tells us: He that approves him
ſelf and is tried *(ſays he)* in *this* [*i. e.* the *Chriſtian*
Way of Piety and Religion, is far from being fo
ward either to *lye* or *ſwear*: For an Oath is
determinative Aſſertion, with a calling God
witneſs for the Truth of it. But how ſhall any o
that is faithful, ſo far render himſelf *unfaithfu*
or unworthy of Belief, as to need an *Oath*, and n
rather make the Courſe of his Life a Teſtimon
to him as firm and poſitive as an *Oath*, and de
monſtrate the Truth of his Aſſertions by the con
ſtant and immutable Tenour of his Words an
Actions? It's enough therefore (as he preſently a
ter adds) for every good Man, either by way of A
firmation or Denial to give this Aſſurance, ἀλη
λέγω, *I ſpeak truly*, to ſatisfy any that apprehen
not the Certainty of what he ſays: For towards *thoſ*
that are without, he ought to have ſuch a Converſa
tion as is moſt worthy of Belief, ſo as no Oat
ſhould be required of him; and towards himſel
and thoſe of his Party, to preſerve ſuch an even an
equitable Temper of Mind, as is a Piece of voluntar
ry Juſtice. This and much more he diſcourſes to th
ſame Purpoſe.

For this and ſome other Reaſons, but eſpecially
from ſome miſtaken Places of *Scripture*, where 'ti
ſaid, *Swear not at all*; ſome of the antient Father
held all taking of an Oath *unlawful*: But beſide
that thoſe few that did, were not herein *conſtan*
to themſelves, the far greateſt Part were of another
Mind, and underſtood the Prohibition either o
ſwearing by *Creatures* (which was the Caſe of the
Jews, and which our *Saviour* and St. *James* principal-
ly aim at) or of *light*, *raſh*, and falſe Swearing. For
otherwiſe, that the Primitive *Chriſtians* did not think
it

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t unlawful to take an *Oath* in ſerious and neceſſary Caſes, is moſt evident. *Athanaſius*, ſpeaking of his *Accuſers*, whom he deſired might be put to their Oath, tells us, That the beſt way to atteſt the Truth of what is ſpoken, is to call God to witneſs; that this (*ſays he*) is the Form of Swearing, which *we Chriſtians* are wont to uſe. And indeed though we had no other Argument, it would be plain enough from hence, that they ſerved in the Wars, and frequently bore *Arms* even under the Heathen Emperors; which 'tis evident they could not do, without firſt taking a *Military* Oath to be true to their General, and to *die* rather than *deſert* their Station. And this *Vegetius* an *Heathen Author*, though living in the Time of the younger *Valentinian*, expreſsly reports of them, That when their Names were entered upon the *Muſter-Roll*, they were wont to take an Oath, the particular Form whereof he there ſets down, *viz. That they ſwore by God, Chriſt, and the Holy Spirit, and the Majeſty of the Emperor; which, next to God, is to be loved and honoured by Mankind.* This agrees very well with that Account which *Tertullian* had long before given of the *Chriſtians*, when being accuſed by their Enemies of High-Treaſon, amongſt other Reaſons, becauſe they refuſed to ſwear by their *Emperors*; he anſwers, That though they would not ſwear by the Emperor's *Genius*, (their *Genii*, or Tutelar Deities being nothing elſe but *Devils*) yet they did ſwear by the Emperor's *Safety*, a Thing more *auguſt* and venerable than all the *Genii* in the World: In the Emperor's they own God's *Inſtitution* and Authority, and would therefore have that to be ſafe which he had appointed, and accordingly accounted it the Matter of a *lawful* Oath; but for the *Dæmons* or *Genii* (ſays he) we uſe *adjurare*, to adjure them, ſo as to *caſt* them out of Men; *non dejurare*, not to Swear by them, and thereby confer the Honour

Apolog. ad Conſtantium Imper. Tom. 1. p. 528.

De re militar. lib. 1. c. 5. p. 33.

Apol. c. 23. p. 28.

Part III. nour of *Divinity* upon them. For the same Reason they denied to swear by the *Fortune* of the *Emperor*, because amongst the Heathens she was accounted a *Deity*, and honoured with Religious Worship.

Thus we see, that they refused not to ensure and ratify their Faith by the Formality of an Oath, to which that they might add the greater Reverence and Solemnity, they were wont many Times to take it at the receiving of the *Holy Sacrament*, as we find in the Case of *Novatus* and his Followers; for taking their Hands wherein they held the Sacramental Elements within his own, he caused them to swear by the *Body* and *Blood* of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, that they would not desert him. But because this may be thought to have been only the Artifice of an *Heretick*, to bind his Followers the faster to his Party; St. *Chrysostom* (though himself no good Friend to taking Oaths) sufficiently assures us, 'twas customary to come into the Church, and to swear upon the *Communion-Table*, taking the Book of the *Holy Gospels* into their Hands. The same appears from the Case proposed to *Gregory Nazianzen*, by *Theodoret* Bishop of *Tyana*, and by the Instance of *Evagrius*, *Nazianzen*'s *Arch-Deacon* at *Constantinople*, who had it revealed to him in a Vision, That some Persons lay in wait for him, and that therefore he must presently be gone; the Person that revealed it, assuring him he would knock off those Fetters that were upon him, if he would swear to him upon the *Holy Gospels*, that he would immediately depart; which was accordingly done. And as their Caution was great in *taking* of an Oath, so their Care was no less in making of it good; they knew that in this solemn Transaction they did in a more peculiar manner call God as a Witness of what they said, and a Revenger in Case of Falshood and the Violation of it: This made them greatly afraid of *Perjury*, which they

Euseb. H. Eccl. lib. c. 43. p. 245.

Ad Pop. Antioch. Hom. 15. Tom. 1. p. 178, 179.

Epist. 219 p. 908.

Sozom. H. Eccl. lib. 6. c. 30. p. 686. vid. Annot Hen. Vales. p. 145. col. 2.

they looked upon as a Sin of a deeper and more than ordinary Dye: And one Reason, I conceive, why some of the Antients were against all Swearing (and * *Clemens Alexandrinus* and † *Lactantius* confirm me in it) was, because they would not come so much as within the Danger or *Possibility* of Perjury. Such as have sworn rashly, or in unlawful Cases, || St. *Basil* earnestly exhorts to Repentance, and that they would not persist in an obstinate Defence of their Impiety; and for such as were guilty of Perjury, he appointed that they should be suspended and banished from the Communion for *Eleven Years* together.

* ὁ μὲν οὖν μηδὲ ὀμνύς, πολλῷ γε δεῖ ἐπιορκήσει. *Loc. supra laudat.*

† *Hic non pejerabit, ne deum ludibrio habeat: sed ne jurabit quidem: Ne quando vel necessitate, vel consuetudine in perjurium cadat.* Lactant. Epitom. cap. 6. p. 744.

|| *Epist. Canon. ad Amphil. can.* 29. *p.* 31. *tom.* 3. *Can.* 64. *p.* 36.

The like Severity, though not altogether so great, they used in case of *Bearing false Witness*. If any Christian falsely accused another before the Church, (for in those Days they allowed no Appeals to Heathen Tribunals) he was to be punished, *i. e.* suspended the Communion, the only Punishment the *Church* in those Days could inflict, according to the Nature of the Crime which he charged upon the other; according to the Decree of the *Illiberine* Council, if he made good his Charge: Yet if he had concealed it a considerable Time before he revealed it, he was to be suspended for *two Years*; the Reason probably being, because by this Delay the Criminal Person had Opportunity to *infect* others, by propagating his vicious Example to them. But that they might not set the Door open, and give Encouragement to busy and malicious Tempers, they ordained, That though the Person should be really guilty of the Crimes he was charged with, yet if the Accuser did not sufficiently prove it *in Conventu Clericorum*, before the *Ecclesiastical Senate*, he should be punished

Conc. Illiber. Can. 74. *p.* 79. *ubi vid. not. Albasp.*

Part. III. with a *five Years* Suſpenſion. And becauſe then they had an Honour and Veneration for *Miniſters* above all other Men, they ordained, That whoſoever ſhould falſely accuſe a *Clergy-man*, *Biſhop*, *Presbyter*, or *Deacon* with any Crime, which he could not make good, ſhould not be received into Communion, even at the *Hour of Death*. The Truth is, they were exceeding tender of any Man's Reputation, readier to add to it than to detract from it, or to faſten any undue Imputation upon him. St. *Baſil* commending *Gregory Thaumaturgus*, has this of him amongſt the reſt: Out of Regard *(ſays he)* to the Threatning of our *Lord*, he durſt never call *his Brother*, *Fool*; no Anger, Wrath, or Bitterneſs proceeded out of his Mouth; *Slandering* he hated as a Quality greatly oppoſite to a State of Salvation; *Pride* and *Envy* were Strangers to that innocent and guiltleſs Soul, he never *approached the Altar till firſt reconciled to his Brother*: All *falſe* and artificial Speeches, and ſuch as are cunningly contrived for the Slander and Detraction of others, he greatly abominated; well knowing, that every Lye is the *Spawn* and Iſſue of the *Devil*, and that God has threatned *to deſtroy all thoſe that ſpeak Lyes*. And ſo indeed he oftentimes does even in this World, not reſpiting ſuch Perſons to the *Tribunals* of the other World; whereof we meet with this memorable Example. *Narciſſus* Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*, a Man of admirable Piety and Holineſs of Life, ſhined with ſo glorious a Luſtre in the Place where he lived, that the Brightneſs of his Converſation offended the ſore Eyes of other Men: Three more eſpecially, not able to bear the eminent Strictneſs of his Life, and being themſelves guilty of very great Enormities, thought to *eſcape* themſelves by accuſing him. Whereupon they laid a very heinous Crime to his Charge, and to beget the greater Credit with them that heard it, ſolemnly ratified it with their

Ibid. Can. 75. p. 81.

Ad Cleric. Eccleſ. Neocæſar. Ep. 63. p. 95. tom. 3.

Euſeb. H. Eccl. lib. 6. c. 9. p. 210.

their *Oaths*: The first, imprecating upon himself that he might be *burnt*, if it were not true: The second, that his Body might be *consumed* by some noisome and pestilent *Disease*: The third, that he might lose his *Sight*. The good Man thought, notwithstanding all this, he stood right in the Thoughts of all true Christians, who knew his Life to be too clear and unblameable, to be *sullied* with the Breath of such vile Fellows; yet not being able to bear it, he withdrew himself to an *Hermit*'s Life in the Wilderness. But the *restless Eye* of the Divine Vengeance quickly overtook these *perjured* Wretches, and caught them in their own Snares; the first, by a little Spark that casually, and whereof no Account could be given, happened in his House, was in the Night himself, *Family*, and *House* universally *burnt* to Ashes; the second was from Head to Foot over-run and consumed by such a *Disease* as he had wished upon himself; the third, that saw all this, and feared the righteous and inevitable Vengeance of God upon himself, *confessed* the whole Plot and Combination, and testified his Repentance with so deep a Sorrow, that with the Multitude of his Tears he lost his *Sight*. Chap. 1.

We have seen how exact the Christians were about their *Words*, that they should be harmless and inoffensive, and the true Conveyances of their Minds; nor were they less careful about the Conduct of their *Actions*, whether of *distributive* or *commutative* Justice. For Matters of *distributive* Justice, so far as it concerns a fair Hearing and impartial Determining of Tryals and Causes, rewarding the Good, and punishing the Bad, they had little Opportunity to shew themselves; Christians in the first Ages being seldom invested with any External *Authority* and Power, till the Empire submitted to *Christianity*, and then we find them executing their Places with the most unbyassed Uprightness and Integrity. St. *Basil* speaking of

Ad Saphron. Magist. Epist. 332. *p.* 325.

Part III. of an excellent Person (though he names him not) who was sent to be Governour of *Neocæsarea*, where he was Bishop, but presently undermined and outed by the Accusation of some that could not bear his free and impartial Carriage, and his Temper so extremely opposite to Flattery, says this of him; That he was a most rigid *Observer* of Justice, courteous and easy of Access to them that were *oppressed*; but his Presence severe and terrible to the *Injurious* and Transgressors of the Law: He was the same to *Rich* and *Poor*, equally at leisure for both: Of all Men, he exceedingly abhorred taking Bribes, never favouring any beyond the Equity of his Cause; and which was above all, he was one that designed to reduce *Christianity* to its ancient Dignity and Perfection. The same *Nazianzen* reports of his own *Father*, and reckons it one of the excellent Properties for which he accounted him a *Christian*, even before he embraced *Christianity*, that he so exactly observed Justice himself, and so impartially administred it to others, that though he went through very great Offices in the State, yet he made not one Farthing's Addition to his own Revenue, though he saw some before his Eyes, who with *Briareus*'s Hands laid hold upon the publick Treasures, and therewith filled their own Coffers.

In Laud. Patr. Orat. 19. p. 290.

In Matters of *commutative* Justice, and ordinary Transactions between Man and Man, they observed the Rule, *To deal with others as they would be dealt with themselves*: They took no Advantage of any Man's *Ignorance* or Unskilfulness, so as to grasp that Commodity at a far *Under-rate*, of which they knew the *Seller* did not understand the true Price and Value, and that if he did, he would not part with it at such a Price. To this Purpose * St. *Augustine* tells us, he knew a Man (probably he means *himself*, though

* *De Trin. lib. 13. c. 3. tom. 3. col. 407.*

out

out of Modesty he conceals it) who having a *Book* of- Chap. 11.
fered him to be sold by one that understood not the
Price of it, at a very under Rate, took the Book,
but gave him the *full* Price according to its just Rate
and Value, which was a great deal more than the
Seller asked for it. And the Truth is, in such Cases
Advantage cannot honestly be taken of Men's Weak-
ness or Mistake; because no Man, if he understood
the true Worth and Value of his Commodity, can be
supposed willing to part with it at a too under Rate.
And if they were thus far from craftily *over-reaching*,
much more from secretly or openly *invading* of what
was another's Right and Property; no Cheating or
Couzenage, no Acts of Dishonesty and Deceit were al-
lowed, or practised amongst them; or if any such
were discovered, they were immediately protested
against by the whole Society of Christians. *Cornelius*
Bishop of *Rome*, giving *Cyprian* an Account of *Novatus* *Epist.* 48.
the Heretick and his Companions, tells him of one *p.* 62. *vid.*
Nicostratus, that not only cheated his *Lady* and *Patro-* *Resp. Cy-*
ness, whose Estate and Revenues he managed, but car- *prian. Ep.*
ried away a great Part of the Treasures of the Church *sequent.*
(whereof he was *chief Deacon*) the Portion and
Maintenance of poor Widows and Orphans; (a Crime
says he, reserved for perpetual Punishment, *i. e.* for
the Judgement of God in the other World, being too
great for any in this) whereupon he was forced to fly
from *Rome* into *Africk*, to avoid the Shame and Pro-
secution of his Rapine and Sacrilege: Though when
he came there, they did not only *refuse* to admit
him into Communion, but openly *exposed* the Wic-
kedness of him and his Confederates to the Abhorren-
cy of all Men. By which may appear the Falsity of
that Charge of *Sacrilege* which the *Gentiles* brought
against the *Christians:* To which, though certainly it
primarily respected their declared Enmity against
the *idolatrous Temples* and Worship of the *Heathens*,

Part III. yet *Tertullian* answers, You look upon us (says he) as *sacrilegious* Persons, and yet never found any of us guilty of *Wrong* or *Injury*, of any *Rapine* and *Violence*, much less of *Sacrilege* and *Impiety*. No, they are your *own* Party, that swear by and worship your Gods, and yet *rob* their Temples; that are no *Christians*, and yet are found to be *sacrilegious*. And afterwards he adds this further Vindication of them:

Ad Scap. 2. *p.* 69.

Ib. c. 4. *p.* 1. As for us (says he) we deny not any *Pledge* that's left with us, we *adulterate* no Man's Marriage-Bed, we piously *educate* and train up Orphans, and relieve the Necessities of the Indigent, and *render no Man Evil for Evil.* If there be any that dissemble our Religion, let them look to it, we *disown* them for being of our Party: Why should we be worse thought of for others Faults? Or why should a Christian answer for any Thing but what concerns his own Religion, which no Man in so long a time has proved to be cruel or incestuous? Nay, when we are burnt and most severely dealt with, 'tis for the greatest *Innocency*, *Honesty*, *Justice*, *Modesty*; for our *Truth* and *Faithfulness*, and our *Piety* to the Living God. And that these were not a Parcel of good Words which the *Christians* spoke in their own behalf, will appear, if we consider the Testimony which *Pliny* (who was far from being partial to them) gives of them: For being commanded by the Emperor *Trajan* to give him an Account of the *Christians*, he tells him, That after the strictest Examination which he could make even of those that had renounced *Christianity*, he found this to be the *greatest Fault that they were guilty of, that they used harmlessly to meet to worship Christ, and at those Meetings to bind themselves by a Sacrament* [*or an Oath*] *that they would not do any Wickedness, that they might be firmlier obliged not to commit Theft, Robberies, Adulteries; not to falsify their Words, or to deny any Thing wherewith they were intrusted, when it was required of them.*

Lib. 10. *ep.* 97. *p.* 290.

Gregory

Gregory Bishop of *Neocæsarea*, in a *Canonical* Epistle which he wrote to rectify several Disorders and Irregularities which had happened amongst the *Christians* of those Parts, by reason of the Inroads and Devastations which the *Goths* and other *barbarous* Nations had made amongst them; does amongst other Things especially take notice, how *uncomely* in it self, how *unsuitable* to Christians it is to *covet*, and to grasp what is *another* Man's; how inhuman to *spoil* the oppressed, and to enrich our selves by the Blood and Ruines of our miserable Brethren. And whereas some might be apt to plead, They did not *steal*, but only take up what they found; he tells them this Excuse would not serve the Turn; that whatever they had found of their *Neighbours*, nay, though it were their *Enemies*, they were bound to *restore* it, much more to their *Brethren*, who were Fellow-Sufferers with them in the same Condition. Others thought it Warrant enough to keep what they found, though belonging to others, having been such *deep Losers themselves*. But this (he tells them) is to *justify* one Wickedness with another; and because the *Goths* had been Enemies to them, they would become *Goths* and *Barbarians* unto others. Nor did they only keep themselves from doing *Injuries* to others; they were ready to do them all the *Right*, all the *Kindness* that lay in their Power, especially to vindicate the Poor and Helpless from the Power and Violence of those that were too mighty for them. Therefore when the Fathers of the *Synod of Sardis* took notice, that some Bishops used to go to Court upon By Errands, and private Designs of their own, they ordained, That no Bishop should go to Court, unless either immediately summoned by the *Emperor's* Letters, or that their Assistance was required to help the *oppressed*, to right *Widows* and *Orphans*, and to rescue them from the unjust Grasps of potent

Chap. 1.

Can. 2, 3, 4, *p.* 119, 120.

Can. 7, 8.

Part III. and merciless Oppressors; and that in these Cases they should be ready (either by *themselves*, or some *deputed* by them) to present their Petitions, to plead their Cause, and to lend them all the Assistance they were able to afford.

I should not in this Place have taken any notice how far the ancient Christians were from *Murder*, and offering Violence to any Man's *Life*, but that it was a common *Charge* brought against them by the *Gentiles*, That they used to *kill* and *devour* an Infant at their *Christian* Meetings, especially when any was first to be initiated into their Assemblies. The Story is thus dressed up by the acute Heathen in *M. Fælix*: *An Infant being covered all over with Meal, (the better to deceive the unwary) is set before him that is to be initiated and taken in: He, ignorant of what it really is, is appointed to cut it up, which he effectually does by many secret and mortal Wounds; whereupon they greedily lick up the Blood, and ravenously tear off and snatch away the several Parts of it. And with this Sacrifice their Confederacy and Combination is made, and by the Conscience of so great a Villany they are mutually obliged to Silence: Such Sacred Rites as these being more horrid and barbarous than the highest Sacrileges in the World.* To this monstrous and horrid Charge, the *Christians* returned these Answers; That they appealed to the common *Faith* of Mankind, whether they could really believe them to be guilty of these Things, so *abhorrent* to all the Principles of Human Nature, and to the Christians *known* Principles and Practices in all other Things; that they should measure the *Christians* by themselves, and if they themselves could not be guilty of such Things, they should not suspect it by the *Christians*, who were endued with the same Principles of *Humanity* with other Men: That they were so far from being Friends to *Murder* or Man-slaughter, that

M. Fel. p. 8. *vid. Tert. Ap.* c. 9. p. 9.

Tert. Ap. c. 9. p. 8. *M. Fel.* p. 25.

Athenag. leg. pro Christian. p. 38. B. *M. Fel.* b.

at they held it unlawful to be present at the *Gla-* Chap 1.
atory Sports, were Mens Lives were so wontonly sa-
rificed to the Pleasure and Curiosity of the People:
That they accounted it Murder for any Woman, by *Athenag.*
vil Arts, to procure *Abortion*, to stifle the *Embryo*, *ib. M. Fel.*
o kill a Child in a manner before it be alive; it be- *ib. Tert. ib.*
ng much at one to *hinder* Life, as to *take it away*, *p. 5.*
o kill a Man, or destroy what *would be* one, seeing
e truly destroys the *Fruit* that kills it in the *Seed*:
That it was not likely they should delight in *Man's* *M. Fel. p.*
Blood, who never tasted any Blood at all, *abstain-* *26. Tert.*
ing from Things strangled, and from Blood. And that *ib. p. 10.*
he very *Heathens* themselves confessed this, when
mongst the several *Arts* they used to discover whe-
her Men were *Christians*, they used to offer them
Bladders full of *Blood*, knowing that they held it
nlawful to *taste* any; and therefore it was migh-
ily improbable they should thirst after *human* Blood,
who abhorred even the Blood of *Beasts*. That they *Athenag.*
heartily believed the *Resurrection* of the Dead; and *ibid.*
herefore would not make themselves the *Sepulchres*
of those Bodies which were to *rise* again, and feed
upon them, as they did upon other Bodies which
were to have no Resurrection: That the Truth was,
if this Charge was true of any, it was true only of
the *Gentiles* themselves, amongst whom these Things
were daily *allowed* and *practised*; that *Saturn* (one of
their chief Deities) did not only expose, but *eat* his
own Children; to him, Infants in *Africk* were offer-
ed in *Sacrifice* by their own Parents; a Custom that
openly continued till the Proconsulship of *Tiberius*,
which though he abolished, yet it continued still in
Corners in *Tertullian's* Days. To his Son *Jupiter* *Ibid.*
they offered *human* Sacrifices, even in *Rome* it self,
and that even to the Time of *M. Felix*, as he him- *De Abst. l.*
self testifies; which is no more than what *Porphyry* *2. sect 56.*
himself (after he had reckoned up in how many *p. 95.*

Parts

Part III. Parts of the World *human* Sacrifices were in use, confesses was done at *Rome* in the Feast of *Jupiter Latialis* even in his Time. Many other Instances of such barbarous Practices are there produced by those two *Apologists*, which they urge with great Advantage upon their Adversaries, whom they challenged to make any such Thing good against them.

And no sooner did Discipline begin to be regularly settled, but their Principles herein were every where confirmed by the *Canons* of the Church, either private or publick. The Woman that industriously made her self *miscarry*, was adjudged to be guilty of *Murder*, and condemned to the same Punishment, a *ten Years Penance*; which was adjudged to be the Case of any that brought forth upon the Way, and *exposed* her Infant. By the Law of the State, made by the Emperor *Valentinian*, whosoever, whether Man or Woman, *killed* an Infant, was to be subject to the same capital Punishment as if he had killed an *adult* Person; which may very well be understood even of *Infants* killed in the *Womb*, the Punishment whereof was formerly for the most Part no more than Banishment. He that was guilty of wilful Murder, was, by St. *Basil*'s Rule, to undergo a *twenty Years Penance* before he was admitted to the Sacrament; though by several Passages in *Tertullian*, it appears that *Homicides* in his Time were more severely treated by the Church; for they were not only bound to a perpetual Penance, but were not *absolved* at Death. But this Severity shortly after began to relax, and such Persons, though obliged to Acts of Repentance all their Life, yet at Death were absolved and admitted to Communion, as is expressly provided by the Decree of the *Ancyran* Council.

Basil. ep. Can. Con. 2. p. 22.
Ib. Can. 33. p. 32.
Cod. Theod. l. 9. tit. 14. l. 1.
Can. 56. p. 36.
Can. 20.

Thus clear did the *Christians* all along stand from any just Suspicion of that gross Piece of *Inhumanity* which

which their Enemies so confidently charged upon them. As for the *Rise* and *Occasion* of this malicious charge, it was doubtless of the same Growth with that of their *incestuous Mixtures* (spoken of before) both springing from the abominable Practice of some *filthy* Hereticks, who sheltered themselves under the *Name* of *Christians*; *Epiphanius* particularly reporting of the *Gnosticks* what the Heathens generally charged upon Christians; for he tells us of them, That at their Meetings they were wont to take an *Infant* begotten in their *promiscuous* Mixtures, and beating it in a *Mortar*, to season it with *Honey* and *Pepper*, and some other Spices and Perfumes, to make it *palatable*, and then, like *Swine* or *Dogs*, to devour it; and after to conclude all with Prayer: And this they accounted their *perfect Passover*. I am not ignorant that a learned Man will by no Means believe, that any of the ancient *Hereticks* did ever arrive to so much *Barbarousness* and Inhumanity, as to be guilty of such Things, and conceives them to have been *feigned* merely out of Hatred to those pestilent Hereticks; but there is little Reason to suspect the Truth of it, *Epiphanius* assuring us, That he had the Account that he gives, from the Mouths of the *Gnosticks* themselves; and that many of the *Women* who were deceived into those abominable Errors, did not only discover these Things to him, but that he himself in his younger Years, while he was in *Egypt*, had been assaulted by them, and by all the Arts of Flattery and Perswasion, of Wontonness and Immodesty, had been set upon to join himself to them. And certainly, it is not imaginable, that a Person so venerable for Learning and Piety, as *Epiphanius* was, should impose upon us by feigning so gross and notorious a Falshood. Besides, whoever reads *Irenæus*, in whose Time these Heresies were most rife and predominant, and considers the Account that he gives

Chap. 1.

Hær. 36. *p.* 43. *vid. de Phryg. seu Quintilian.* *Hær.* 48. *p.* 181. *de Montanist.* *Zon. & Balsam. in Can.* 7. *Corc. Const. Desid. Herald. Not. ad M. Fæl. p.* 76.

Ibid. p. 48.

Part III. gives of them, which he mainly received from th
Persons of their own Party, after they were re
turned back to the Church; will see little Reaso
either to think any Wickedness *too great* for them
to boggle at, or to doubt of the Truth of what h
reports concerning them.

CHAP. II.

Of their admirable Love and Charity

The excellent Temper of the Christian Religion. The Gospel principally enjoins Kindness and Charity. The Primitive Christians eminently of this Spirit. They accounted all Brethren; but Christians more especially. Their mutual Love noted and recorded by their Enemies. Their mighty Zeal and Charity for the Souls of Men, to recover them from Vice and Errour to Truth and Vertue. This the Matter of their daily Prayer, and most serious Endeavours, even towards their greatest Enemies. Pamphilus's *Charity in bestowing Bibles freely upon the Poor. Preachers maintained for converting the Gentile* Phœnicians *to Christianity. The famous Story of St.* John's *hazarding himself for the regaining a young Man debauched by bad Companions.* Monica's *Care and Sollicitude about St.* Augustine. *Some that have sold themselves for Slaves, that they might convert their Heathen or Heretical Masters. Christians not shy of communicating the Knowledge of their Religion,*

Religion. Their Charity as it respected the Necessities of the outward Life: This noted in several Instances of Charity. Their liberal providing for the Poor. The Bounty of particular Persons: Divers Instances of it. The immense Charity of Epiphanius. *Exemplary Vengeance upon some that abused it. The Poor accounted the Treasure and Ornaments of the Church; represented in the Case of* Laurentius *the Deacon, and a Story related by* Palladius. *Their visiting and assisting the Sick in their own Persons; eminently noted in the Empress* Placilla, *and the Lady* Fabiola. *The Christians Care of their Brethren in a great Plague at* Alexandria. *Persons appointed on purpose to cure and attend the Sick. The* Parabolani, *who; their Office and Number. Redemption of Captives. Great Sums contributed by* Cyprian *and his People for it. Church-Plate sold to redeem Christians, nay, captived Enemies. Christians embondaging themselves to redeem others. The strange Charity of* Paulinus *Bishop of* Nola, *making himself a Slave to ransom a poor Widow's Son. Their Care about the Bodies of the Dead. Decent Burial very fit and desirable. A Piece of Piety remarkable in the Christians of those Times. Their Abstaining from the common Custom of burning the Dead, as barbarous. The great Cost they laid out upon their Funerals in embalming, intombing, &c. The* Copiotæ, *who. What their Office and Orders. The* Decani, *or Deans in the Church of*

Con-

Constantinople: *Their Number and Duty. Their Providing fit Places for Sepulture. The* Cœmeteria, *or Burying-places in the Fields. Burying in Cities and Churches, when brought in, and to whom first granted. The* Cœmeteria *under Ground. What Kind of Places they were. The great Number, and vast Capacities of them. A particular Account of one out of* Baronius, *discovered in his Time. How the Christians were enabled to all these Acts of Charity. At first all in Common: After by usual Contributions. The standing Stock or Treasury of the Church. The Charity of Christians largely attested by* Julian *and* Lucian. *Their Love and Charity universal. Doing Good to Enemies, an Excellency proper to Christians. This manifested in several remarkable Instances. Plainly acknowledged by* Julian *himself. The whole summed up in an elegant Discourse of* Lactantius *concerning Mercy and Charity.*

THAT the *Christian* Religion was immediately designed to improve and perfect the Principles of human Nature, appears as from many other Instances of it, so especially from this, That it so strictly enjoins, cherishes and promotes that natural *Kindness* and *Compassion*, which is one of the prime and essential Inclinations of Mankind. Wherever the Gospel is cordially complied with, it begets such a sweet and gracious Temper of Mind, as makes us Humble, Affable, Courteous and Charitable, ready and disposed to every *good Wark*,

prompt

prompt to all Offices of Humanity and Kindness; Chap. 2.
files off the Ruggedness of Mens Natures, ba-
nishes a rude, churlish, and *Pharisaical* Temper,
and infuses a more calm and treatable Disposition.
It commands us to *live and love as Brethren, to love without Hypocrisy, to have fervent Charity amongst our selves, and to be kindly affectioned one towards another.* It lays the Sum of our Duty towards others in this, *To love our Neighbour as our selves.* This our Saviour seems to own as his proper and peculiar Law, and has ratified it with his own solemn Sanction: *A new Commandment I give unto you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.* And then makes this the great visible *Badge* of all those who are truly Christians: *By this shall all Men know that you are my Disciples, if you have Love one to another.*

And so indeed it was with those first and best Ages of Religion; for no sooner did the Gospel fly abroad into the *World*, but the Love and Charity of Christians became notorious, even to a *Proverb*; the Heathens taking Notice of the Christians of those Times with this particular Remark, *See how these Christians love one another!* They were then united in the most happy *Fraternity* (a Word much used by *Christians* in those Days, and objected against them by the *Heathens*) they lived as *Brethren*, and accounted themselves such, not only as being sprung from one common Parent (for in this respect that they had Nature for their common *Mother*, they acknowledge the very *Heathens* to be *Brethren*, though otherwise little deserving the Name of *Men*) but upon much higher Accounts, *viz.* that they had one and the same God for their *Father*, *drank* all of the same Spirit of Holiness, were brought out of the same *Womb* of Darkness and Ignorance into the same

Tert. Ap. c. 39. p. 31.

Id. ib. M. Fœl. p. 26.

Part III. same Light of Truth, that they were Partakers of the same Faith, and Co-heirs of the same Hope. This *Lucian* himself confesses of them, and that it was one of the great Principles that their Master instilled into them, That they should all become *Brethren*, after once they had thrown off the Religion of the *Gentiles*, and had embraced the Worship of their great *crucified* Master, and given up themselves to live according to his Laws. The Truth is; so ready, entire, and constant was their Kindness and Familiarity, that the Heathens accused them for having *privy* Marks upon their Bodies, whereby they fell in Love with each other at first Sight. Indeed they never met but they embraced one another with all the Demonstrations of a hearty and sincere Affection, saluting each other with an *holy Kiss* not only in their own Houses, but at their religious Assemblies, as a Badge and Bond of that Christian Fellowship and Communion that was maintained amongst them.

De mort. Peregrin. p. 764. tom. 2.

M. Fel. ib. & p. 7.

But the Love and Kindness of those *Christians* of Old did not lie only in a smooth complimental Carriage, or in a Parcel of good Words, *Depart in Peace, be you warmed or filled*; but in the real Exercises of Charity and Mercy. Now because the two great Objects of *Charity* are the Good of Mens *Souls* and their outward and bodily Welfare and Happiness; we shall find, that the Primitive Christians were highly eminent and exemplary for both these. The Soul being of a much higher and nobler Nature and consequently infinitely more precious and valuable than the Body, they were accordingly infinitely careful and sollicitous to save Mens Souls, *to recover them out of the Snare of the Devil*, and the Paths of Ruin, by making them *Christians*, and bringing them over to the *Knowledge of the Truth*; for this they prayed daily and earnestly. We *Christians* (says *Cyprian* to

to the *Proconsul*) serve the one and true God that made Heaven and Earth, and pray to him Night and Day, not only for our selves, but for all Men, and for the Safety of the Emperors themselves. From this, no Injuries nor Unkindnesses could discourage them. *Justin Martyr* tells the *Jews*, That they prayed for them, and all others that were unjustly their Enemies, that repenting of their Wickednesses, and ceasing to *blaspheme Christ Jesus*, who by the Greatness of his Works, the Uncontrolableness of the Miracles performed in his Name, the Excellency of his Doctrines, and the Clearness of the Prophecies fulfilled in him, appeared to be altogether innocent and unblameable; and that rather believing in him, they might, together with *Christians*, be saved by him at his second glorious Coming, and not be condemned by him to everlasting Flames. We pray for you (says he) that *Christ* would have Mercy upon you; for he hath taught us to *pray for our Enemies*, to *love* them, and be *merciful* to them. And afterwards, when he had reckoned up all those wicked and malicious Artifices which the *Jews* had used both against *Christ* and *Christians*; yet notwithstanding all this (says he) we are so far from hating either you, or those who at your Suggestion believe these Things of us, that we *pray* that all of you may repent, and obtain Mercy from God, the gracious and compassionate Parent of the World. The *Gnosticks* were the greatest Scandal that ever was to *Christianity*, and the Occasion of many of those Persecutions, and most of those horrible Calumnies which the Heathens brought upon the Christians, and yet see how *Irenæus* treats them! We pray for them (says he) and beg of them not to continue in the Pit which they have digged to themselves, but to depart from their sottish and idle Vanities, to turn to the Church of God, that *Christ may be*

Chap. 2.

Passio Cyp. vit. ejus annex. p. 17.

Dial. cum Tryph. p. 254.

Ib. p. 243.

Ib. p. 333.

Adv. Har. l. 3. *c.* 46. *p.* 314.

Part III. *formed in them*, and that they may *know the only true God*, the Creator of the World. This we beg of them, loving them to better Purpose than they think they love themselves: For our Love is true and wholesome (if they will receive it) like a *sharp* Plaister indeed, but it will eat away the proud Flesh, take down the Swelling and Vanity of their Minds; for which Cause we will not cease by all Means to apply it to them. The same *Origen* tells *Celsus*, That though both *Jews* and *Gentiles* turned their backs upon the Doctrine of *Christ*, and charged them for being *Impostors* and Deceivers; yet they would not give over thus *honestly* to deceive Men, to make them of loose Persons to become sober and temperate, or to bring them on towards it; of dishonest, to make them righteous; of unwise, to make them prudent, at least to bring them into the Way to these things; of fearful and timorous, to render them hearty and couragious, especially as oft as they are to contend for their Religion and Piety towards God. How earnestly and passionately does *Cyprian* beg of the Proconsul *Demetrian* and the *Gentiles* to provide for their Happiness and Safety, to accept of the Counsels and Assistance which the *Christians* offered, who loved them not the worse for all the Torments and Sufferings they laid upon them; that they returned Kindness for Hatred, and by the Miseries they endured, shewed to them the Way to Heaven; that now was the time to make their Peace with God, and to secure Salvation; that there was *no Place for Repentance* on the other side the Grave, the *Stations* of the other World being fixed and unchangeable; that therefore they should believe and live so, that they might eternally rejoice with them, whom they did now so afflict and persecute.

Lib. 2. p. 110.

Ad Demet. p. 204.

In pursuance of this Design, they spared neither *Pains* nor *Cost*, that they might instruct Men in the Way

Way to Heaven. It is said of *Pamphilus* the *Martyr*, that amongst other Instances of his Charity, he used freely and readily to bestow *Bibles* upon all that were willing to read; for which Purpose he had always great Numbers of those Holy Volumes by him, that as Occasion served he might distribute and bestow them: By these Means mercifully furnishing those with these Divine Treasures, whose Purses could not otherwise reach to the Price of the Scriptures, far dearer in those Days than they are since *Printing* came into the World. We find St. *Chrysostom* so zealous for converting the *Gentiles* to *Christianity*, that for this very End he maintained many *Presbyters* and *Monks* in *Phœnicia*, partly at his own Charge, and partly by the Assistance of pious and well-disposed Persons, whose only Work it was to *catechise* and instruct the *Heathens* in the Principles of the *Christian* Faith; and that the Business might succeed more effectually, he procured a Law from the Emperor *Arcadius* (yet extant in the *Theodosian Code*) directed to *Eutychian*, *Prefect* of the *East*, That the Pagan *Temples* should be orderly taken down, that so they being destroyed, the whole Matter of the *Gentile* Superstition might be abolished. Upon the executing of which Law great Mutinies were raised by the Country-People, many of the *Monks* wounded, and some slain, and the rest wholly disheartned to proceed in the Business (these doubtless being *those* very *Monks* against whom *Libanius* so severely declaims, for so mercilessly destroying the *Pagan* Temples.) Whereupon *Chrysostom* (who was then in Banishment) writes to them to bear up with a Christian and Invincible Patience, encourages them resolutely to go on in so good a Work; tells them, That God would not be wanting to stand by them, and to reward them in this and the other Life; and promises them (though his *Incomes* at this time were very small) that their

Chap. 2.

Hier. adv. Ruffin. tom. 2. p. 199. & Euseb.

Theod. Hist. Eccl. l. 5. c. 29. p. 299.

Lib. 16. tit. 10. de Pag. Sacrif. & Temp. l. 17.

Orat. de Temp. p. 10

Ep. 123. tom. 4. p. 756.

Part. III. former Pensions should be paid them, and all Things necessary provided for them. And indeed with how much Care and Sollicitude the good Man's Mind was filled about this Business, he sufficiently intimates in a Letter written to another Person, whom he had employed about this Affair. Nor did they in those Times regard *Ease* or *Safety* any more than they did Cost and Charges in this Matter, exposing themselves to any Dangers, that they might do Good to the Souls of Men.

Ad. Ruffin. Presbyt. ep. 126. p. 763.

I might easily shew, That this Consideration had a great Influence upon the Sufferings of the Primitive Martyrs, willingly running any Hazards, cheerfully enduring any Miseries, that they might gain others to the Faith, and prevent their eternal Ruin. But that famous Story of St. *John* the Apostle shall serve instead of many, the *Sum* of which is this: Coming to a Place near *Ephesus*, in his Visitation of the Churches, he espied a *Youth* of a comely Shape and pregnant Parts, and taking hold of him, delivered him to the *Bishop* of the Place, with this Charge, (which he repeated once and again) *I commend this Person to thee, to be looked to with all Care and Diligence, and that in the Presence of Christ and the Church.* The Bishop undertook the Charge, received the young Man into his House, instructed him, and at last *baptized* him. Which being done, he thought he might remit a little of the Strictness of his Care; but the young Man making an ill Use of his Liberty, fell into bad Company, by whose Arts and Snares he was seduced into Ways of Riot and Wickedness; till despairing of all Hope of Pardon from God, he let loose the Reins to all manner of Exorbitancy; and agreeing with his Confederates, they combined themselves into a Society of Highway-men, and made him their *Captain*, who quickly became as far beyond the rest in Fierceness and Cruelty, as he was in Power and Authority.

Euf. Hist. Eccl. l. 3. c. 23. p. 92.

thority. St. *John* upon Occaſion returning ſome while after to the ſame Place, after he had diſpatched his other Buſineſs, required from the Biſhop the *Pledge* he had left with him; who wondring, and not knowing what he meant; *I mean* (ſaid St. *John*) *the Young Man, it is the Soul of my Brother that I require.* The old Man, with a dejected Look, and Tears in his Eyes, anſwered, *He is dead:* And being demanded by what Kind of Death? anſwered, *He is dead to God*; for, alas! he is become a *Villain*, and inſtead of the Church, is fled with his Companions to the Mountains to be a Thief and a Robber. The Apoſtle renting his Clothes, and bewailing that he had ſo ill betruſted his Brother's Soul, immediately called for a Horſe and a Guide, and made Haſte to the Mountains; where being taken by thoſe that ſtood *Sentinel*, he begged to be brought before their *Captain*, who ſtood ready armed ſome way off; but as ſoon as he perceived it was St. *John* that was coming towards him, he began to be aſhamed, and to run as faſt as he could. The Apoſtle, not regarding his own Age and Weakneſs, followed after with all his Might; and when his Legs could not overtake him, he ſent theſe paſſionate Exclamations after him; *Why, O my Son, doſt thou fly from thy aged and unarmed Father? Take Pity of me, and fear not, there is yet Hope of Salvation for thee. I will undertake with* Chriſt *for thee*; *if need be, I will freely undergo Death for thee, as our Lord did for us, and lay down my own Life to ranſom thine*; *only ſtay and believe me, for I am ſent by* Chriſt. With that he ſtaid, and with a dejected Look, throwing away his Arms, he trembled, and diſſolved into Tears; he embraced the aged *Apoſtle* with all poſſible Expreſſions of Sorrow and Lamentation, as if again *baptized* with his own Tears. St. *John* aſſured him, he had obtained his Pardon of *Chriſt*, and having faſted and prayed with

Chap. 2.

Part III. him and for him, and with all the Arts of Consolation refreshed his shattered and disconsolate *Mind*, brought him into, and restored him to the Church.

This Story, though somewhat long, I was the willinger to produce, both because so remarkable in it self, and so great a Testimony of that mighty *Tenderness* and Compassion which they had for the Souls of Men; for whose sake they thought they could never *do*, never venture far enough. St. *Augu-*

Confess. l. 9. c. 9. p. 155. tom. 1. *stin* tells us, what infinite Pains his Mother *Monica* took about the Conversion of her Husband *Patricius*; how unwearedly she sought to endear her self to him, by all the Arts of a meek, prudent, and sober Carriage; how submissively she complied with his rigorous and untoward Humours, how diligently she watched the aptest Times of Insinuation, never leaving, till at last she gained him over to the Faith. Nor was her Care and Sollicitude less for her Son *Augustine*, who being hurried away with the Lewdnesses of Youth, and intangled with the Impieties of the *Manichean* Heresy, was the hourly Subject of her Prayers and Tears. She plied him with daily Counsels and Intreaties, implored the Help and Assistance of good Men, and importuned Heaven for the Success of all; not being able to gain any Quiet to her Mind, till St. *Ambrose* (with whom she had often advised about it) sent her away with this Assurance, *That it was not possible that a Child of so many Tears should perish.* No sooner was his Conversion wrought, but her Spirit was at ease, and she now desired no more. Him-

Ib. c. 10. self tells us, That discoursing with her alone some few Days before her Death, concerning the State of the Blessed, and the Joys of Heaven, she at last broke off with this Farewel: *For my Part, Son, I have now no further Hopes or Pleasures in this World; there was but one Thing for which I desired to live, that I might*

might see thee a Catholick Christian before I died; this my good God has abundantly blessed me with, having let me see thee despising the Felicities of this Life, and entred into his Family and Service; so that what do I make any longer here? Nay, so great a Zeal had they for the Good of Souls in those Days, That many did not stick to engage themselves in *temporal* Slavery, for no other End but to deliver others from *spiritual* Bondage. Thus *Serapion*, called *Sindonites* (because he had never wore more than one poor linnen Garment) one of the Primitive *Asceticks*, sold himself to a *Gentile Player*, that served the Theatre; with whom he lived and underwent the meanest Offices, till he had converted him, his Wife, and whole Family to Christianity, who upon their Baptism restored him to his Liberty: whereupon he freely returned them back the *Money* which he had received as the Price of his Servitude, which by mutual Consent was given to the Poor. Coming afterwards to *Lacedæmon*, and hearing that a principal Person of the City, a very good Man otherwise, was infected with the *Manichean* Heresy; one of the first Things he did, was to insinuate himself into his Family, selling himself to be his Slave; in which Condition he remained for two Years together, till he had brought his Master, and his whole Family, off from that pernicious Heresy, and restored them to the Church; who did not only bless God for it, but treated him not as a *Servant*, but with that Kindness and Reverence that is due to a *Brother* and a *Father*. This was the good Spirit and *Genius* of those Days; they entirely studied and designed the Happiness of Men, were willing and desirous freely to impart the Treasures of the Gospel, and wished, That in that respect all Mankind were as rich and happy as themselves. So far were they from that malicious Imputation

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Pallad. Hist. Laus. c. 83. in vit. Serap. p. 182.

Part III. which *Celsus* fastned upon them, That if all Men would become *Christians* they would not admit it! To which *Origen* flatly returns the *Lye*; and tells him, the Falseness of it might appear from this, That *Christians* (as much as in them lay) were not backward to propagate their Doctrine through the whole World; and that some of them had peculiarly undertaken to go up and down, not only in Cities, but in Towns and Villages, to bring over others to the true Religion. And that they did not this out of any Designs of *Gain* or Interest to themselves, was plain, because they often refused to receive *necessary* Accommodations from others; or if they did, they were such only as were barely and absolutely necessary for the present Turn, whenas far greater Liberalities have been offered to them. Nay, some of the ancient *Canons* expressly require, That no Man, who has either *Hereticks* or *Infidels* in his Family, shall be admitted to the Order either of *Bishop*, *Presbyter*, or *Deacon*, who has not first converted those Persons to the true Christian Faith.

Orig. cont. Cels. l. 3. p. 116.

Conc. Car. 3. Can. 1.

Having seen what Kindness and Charity they expressed to Mens *Souls*, we come next to that which respected their *Bodies*, and the Necessities of the outward Life: This they shewed in several Instances; we shall consider some of the most material. In the first Place, they took special Care to provide for the *Poor*, and such as were unable to help themselves: This, *Cyprian* in his Retirement gave especially in Charge to the *Presbyters* and *Deacons* of his Church, that by all Means they should mind the Poor, and furnish them with whatever was necessary for them. *Dionysius* Bishop of *Corinth*, testifies of the Church of *Rome*, That they did not only eminently provide for their own Poor, but with great Liberality administer to the Necessities of other Churches, plentifully relieving whatever indigent Brethren came to them, or wherever

Ep. 5. p. 13.

Euf. Hist. Eccl. l. 4. c. 23. p. 145.

wherever they were, though at the greatest distance from them. And of the Church of *Antioch*, *Chryso-* Chap. 2.

stom tells us, That in his time, though the Revenues of it were but small, yet besides its *Clergy*, besides *Strangers*, *Lepers*, and such as were in *Bonds*, it daily maintained above *three thousand* Widows and Maids. Indeed the Bounty of those Times was almost incredible. St. *Cyprian*, upon his turning Christian, sold his Estate to relieve the Wants of others; and could not be restrained from it, either by the Persuasions of others, or the Consideration of what he might be reduced to himself. After his Entrance upon the Ministry, his Doors were open to all that came; from whom no Widow ever returned empty: To any that were Blind, he would be their Guide to direct them; that were Lame, he was ready to lend his Assistance to support them; none were oppressed by Might, but he was ready to defend them. *Cæsarius*, St. *Basil*'s Brother, made only this short *Will* when he died; *I will that all my Estate be given to the Poor*. *Nazianzen* reports of his Father, That he was so kind to the Poor, that he did not only bestow the *Surplusage* of his Estate upon them, but even Part of what was reserved for *necessary* Uses: Of his Mother, That an Ocean of Wealth would not have filled her unsatisfied desire of doing Good; and that he had often heard her say, That if it were lawful, she could willingly have sold her *Self* and *Children*, to have expended the Price upon the Uses of the Poor: And of his Sister *Gorgonia*, that she was immensely liberal; *Job*-like, her Gate was open to every Stranger; she was *Eyes* to the *Blind*, *Feet* to the *Lame*, and a *Mother* to *Orphans*; her Estate was as common to the Poor, and as much at their need, as every one's is to himself; dispersing and scattering abroad, and according to the Counsel of our *Saviour*, *laying up her Treasure in Heaven*.

Hom. 67. *in Matth.* *p.* 586.

Vit. ejus per Paul. Diac. p. 11. 12.

Basil. ad. Sophron. ep. 84. *p.* 156.

tom. 3. *Orat.* 19. *p.* 298.

Ibid. p. 299.

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Part III. They gave not only *according to*, but *beyond* the Ability; trusting to the Goodness and Fidelity of Heaven to supply what *wanted*, which many Times made the Return, with Overplus, by ways uncommon and extraordinary. *Sozomen* relates of *Epiphanius* Bishop of *Salamine* in *Cyprus*, That having spent all his own Estate in pious and charitable Uses, in relieving the Needy, and such as were by Ship-wreck and the Mercy of the Sea, cast upon the Coast; he freely dispensed and distributed the Goods and Treasures of his Church (which by the Bounty of charitable Persons from all Parts, who thought they could not better lodge their Estates than in the Hands of so good a Man, was very rich and wealthy) and that with so liberal a Hand, that the *Steward* or Guardian of the Church, finding its Stock begin to grow very low, with some Resentment told him of it, charging him as too profuse and open-handed: All which notwithstanding, he remitted nothing of his accustomed Bounty to the Poor. At length, all being spent, a *Stranger* on a sudden comes into the Steward's Lodgings, and delivers into his Hands a great *Purse* of *Gold*, without any Discovery either who it was that brought it, or who it was that *sent* it. And indeed so vast and universal was the Charity of this good Man, that it sometimes made him liable to be *imposed* upon by crafty and designing Persons, whereof the *Historian*, in the same Place, gives this remarkable Instance: A couple of Beggars meeting *Epiphanius*, and knowing the Charitableness of his Temper, to draw the greater Alms from him, agreed to put this Trick upon him. One of them lies along upon the Ground, feigning himself to be dead, the other standing by him, passionately bewailed the Death of his Companion and his own Poverty, not able to give him Burial. *Epiphanius* pitied the Man, persuaded him

H. Eccl. lib. 7. c. 27. p. 749.

to

to bear his Loss patiently, and not to expect that his Companion should in this World rise any more, bid him take care for his Burial, and withal gave him what was sufficient for it. No sooner was he gone out of Sight, but the Beggar comes to his Companion, jogs him with his Foot, and commends him for so ingeniously acting the Cheat: *Rise* (said he) *and with what we have got, let's be merry and jolly to Day.* But alas! the *Comedy* was turned into a *Tragick Scene*, the Man was really dead, and could not be recovered by all his Cries or stirring: Which his Companion no sooner perceived, but with all haste makes after the *Bishop*, cries and tears his Hair, confesses the Cheat, and begs that his Companion might be restored to Life; but all in vain. The Bishop bids him to be content, and tells him, that God would not undo what he had done: *Leaving a fair Warning to Men* (says the *Historian*) *that the great God, who sees and hears all Things, reckons those Mockeries that are put upon his Servants, as if done to himself.* But this only upon occasion of that great Charity which they then upon all Occasions extended to the Poor. The Truth is, they then looked upon the Poor as the *Treasure* and *Ornament* of the Church, by whom, as by Bills of Exchange, they returned their Estates into the other World. When *Decius* the *Emperor*, demanded of *Laurentius* the *Deacon* of the Church of *Rome*, the Church's Treasures, he promised, after three Days, to produce them; in which Time, having gathered together the *Blind* and the *Lame*, the *Infirm*, and the *Maim*, at the Time appointed, he brought them into the Palace; and when the *Emperor* asked for the *Treasures* he had promised to bring with him, he shews him his Company: *Behold!* (said he) *these are the Treasures of the Church, those Eternal Treasures which are never diminished, but increase; which are dispersed*

Chap. 2.

Act. Laurent. apud Sur. ad diem 10 *Aug. Tom.* 4. *vid. Ambr. Offic. lib.* 2. *c.* 28. *Tom.* 1.

Part III. *ſed to every one, and yet found in all.* This Paſſage brings to my Mind (though it more properly belongs to the next Inſtance of *Charity*) what *Palladius* relates of *Macarius*, a *Presbyter*, and Governour of the *Hoſpital* at *Alexandria*: There was a Virgin in that City very rich, but infinitely covetous and uncharitable: She had been oft attempted and ſet upon by the Perſuaſions of good Men, but in vain; at laſt he caught her by this Piece of *pious* Policy. He comes to her, and tells her, that a Parcel of Jewels, *Emeralds* and *Jacinths*, of ineſtimable Value, were lodged at his Houſe; but which the Owner was willing to part with for five hundred Pieces of Money; and adviſes her to buy them. She catching at the Offer, as hoping to gain conſiderably by the Bargain, delivered him the Money, and intreated him to buy them for her, knowing him to be a Perſon of great Piety and Integrity. But hearing nothing from him a long time after, till meeting him in the Church, ſhe asked him what were become of the *Jewels?* He told her, he had laid out the Money upon them (for he had expended it upon the Uſes of the *Hoſpital*) and deſired her to come and ſee them; and if the Purchaſe did not pleaſe her, ſhe might refuſe it. She readily came along with him to the Hoſpital, in the upper Rooms whereof the *Women* were lodged, in the lower the *Men*. He asked her which ſhe would ſee firſt, the *Jacinths*, or the *Emeralds*; which ſhe leaving to him, he brought her firſt into the upper Part, where the *Lame*, *Blind*, and *Cripple-Women* were diſpoſed; and *See*, ſaid he, *the Jacinths that I ſpoke of!* Then carrying her down into the lower Rooms, he ſhewed her the *Men* in the like Condition, and told her, *Theſe are the Emeralds that I promiſed, and Jewels more precious than theſe, I think, are not to be found. And now*, ſaid he, *if you like not your Bargain, take your Money back again.*

Hiſt. Lauſ. c. 6. p. 22.

gain. The Woman blushed, and was troubled to think she should be haled to that, which she ought to have done freely for the Love of God. Afterwards she heartily thanked *Macarius*, and betook herself to a more Charitable and Christian Course of Life. Chap. 2.

Next to this, their Charity appeared in *visiting* and assisting of the *Sick*; contributing to their Necessities, refreshing their tired Bodies, curing their Wounds or Sores with their own Hands. The Sick (saith the antient Author of the Epistle in *Justin Martyr*, if it be not *Justin* himself) are not to be neglected; nor is it enough for any to say, I have never learnt to serve and give Attendance: For he that shall make his Delicacy or Tenderness unaccustomed to any Hardness, to be an Excuse in this Case, let him know it may soon be his own; and then he'll quickly discern the Unreasonableness of his own Judgement, when the same shall happen to him, that he himself has done to others. But there were no such nice and squeamish Stomachs, in the good *Christians* of those Times. St. *Hierom* tells us of *Fabiola*, a *Roman* Lady, a Woman of considerable Birth and Fortunes, That she sold her Estate, and dedicated the Money to the Uses of the Poor: She built an Hospital, (and was the first that did so) wherein she maintained and cured the Infirm and Miserable, or any Sick that she met withal in the Streets: Here was a whole *Rendesvous* of Cripples, hundreds of Diseases and Distempers here met together, and her self at hand to attend them; sometimes carrying the diseased in her Arms, or bearing them on her Shoulders; sometimes washing and dressing those filthy and noisom Sores, from which another would have turned his Eyes with Contempt and Horrour; otherwhile preparing them Food, or giving them Physick with her own Hand. The like

Epist. ad Zen. & Seren. p. 514.

Epitaph. Fabiolæ ad Ocean. p. 199. *tom.* 1.

we

Part III. we read of *Placilla* the *Empress*, Wife to the young *Theodosius*, that she was wont to take all possible Care for the Lame or Wounded, to go home to their Houses, carry them all necessary Conveniences, and to attend and assist them, not by the ministery of her Servants and Followers, but with her own Hands. She constantly visited the common *Hospitals*, attended at sick Beds for their Cure and Recovery, tasted their Broths, prepared their Bread, reached them their Provisions, washed their Cups with her own Hands, and underwent all other Offices, which the very meanest of the Servants were to undergo. Thus also the *Historian* reports of *Deogratias*, the aged Bishop of *Carthage*, under the *Vandalick* Persecution, That having sold all the Plate belonging to the Church to ransom the captive *Christians*, and wanting Places conveniently to bestow them, he lodged them in two large Churches, provided for the Needy; took care of the Sick, himself every Hour visiting them both by Day and Night, with Physicians attending him to superintend their Cure and Diet suitable to their several Cases, going from Bed to Bed, to know what every one stood in need of. Nay, how often did they venture to relieve their Brethren, when labouring under such Distempers as seemed immediately to breathe *Death* in their Faces? Thus in that sad and terrible Plague at *Alexandria*, which though it principally raged amongst the *Gentiles*, yet seized also upon the *Christians*: Many of the Brethren (says the *Historian*) out of the excessive Abundance of their *Kindness* and *Charity*, without any Regard to their own Health and Life, boldly ventured into the thickest Dangers; daily visiting, attending, instructing, and comforting their sick and infected Brethren, 'till themselves expired and died with them. Nay, many of them, whom they thus attended, recovered and lived, while they who had looked to them, died themselves; as if by

Theod. H. Eccl. lib. 5. c. 18. p. 160.

Vict. Utic. de persecu. Vandal. lib. 1. fol. 5. p. 2.

Euseb. H. Eccl. lib. 7. c. 22. p. 269.

a

strange and prodigious *Charity* they had willingly taken their Diseases upon them, and died themselves to save them from Death. Thus 'twas with the *Christians*, while the *Gentiles*, in the mean time, put off all Sense of Humanity: When any began to fall sick amongst them, they presently cast them out, shunned their dearest Friends and Relations, left them half dead in the Highways, and took no Care of them, either alive or dead. Chap. 2.

And that this Work of Charity might be the better managed amongst *Christians*, they had in many places (and particularly in this of *Alexandria*) certain Persons, whose proper Office it was to attend and administer to the Sick: They were called *Parabolani*, (because, especially in pestilential and infectious Distempers, they did παραβάλλεσθαι, *cast* themselves into an immediate hazard of their Lives) and were peculiarly deputed, *ad curanda debilium ægra corpora*, (as the Law of the younger *Theodosius* expresses it) to attend and cure the Bodies of the Infirm and Sick. Their *Numbers*, it seems, were very great; insomuch, that upon any tumultuary Occasions, they became formidable even to the Courts of Civil Judicature: Upon Complaint whereof made to the Emperor, *Theodosius* reduced their Number to five hundred; which being found too little, by a second *Constitution* he enlarged it to six hundred. The Truth is, these *Parabolani* were a Kind of *Clergy-Physicians*; for that they were under an Ecclesiastical Cognizance is plain, being reckoned up with the *Clergy*: And accordingly, by the latter Constitution of *Theodosius*, were appointed to be chosen by, and to be immediately subject to the *Bishop* of the Place. *Cod. Theod. lib. 16. tit. 2. de Episcopis, &c. S. 42, 43.*

A third Instance of their Love and Charity, (and which St. *Ambrose* calls the *highest* Piece of Liberality) was their Care of those that were in *Captivity*, groaning under the merciless Tyranny and Oppression *Offic. lib. 2. c. 15. p. 42.*

Part III. sion of their Enemies, to *relieve* them under, and r
deem them out of their Bondage and Slavery. C
Epist. 60. *p.* 96. *prian*, in a Letter to the Bishops of *Numidia*, abo
this very thing, The Redemption of those *Christia*
amongst them that had been taken Captive by th
Barbarians; elegantly bewails their Misery, and ea
nestly presses their Redemption; and as a help to
Rigalt. in loc. wards it, sent them *Sestertium centum millia num*
mum: Which *Rigaltius* computes to twenty fiv
thousand Pounds *French*, though others, more truly
Gronov. de pecun. vet. lib. 2. *c.* 2. *p.* 131. reduce it to a much lower Sum, *viz.* seven thou
sand five hundred, or two thousand five hundre
Crowns: Which he and his People had liberall
contributed to it. Of *Acasius* Bishop of *Amida*, w
H. Eccl. lib. 7. *c.* 21. *p.* 360. read in *Socrates*, That when the *Roman* Army had ta
ken seven thousand *Persians* captive, and would nei
ther release them without a Ransom, nor yet give them
Food to keep them alive; this good Bishop, wit
the Consent of the Clergy of his Church, caused al
the Gold and Silver *Plate*, and Vessels that belonged
to their Church to be melted down; ransomed the
Wretches, fed them, and then freely sent them
home to their own Prince: With which *generous*
Charity the King of *Persia* (as he well might) was
strangely amazed, finding that the *Romans* knew how
to conquer an Enemy by *Kindness*, no less than by
Ibid. c. 28. *p.* 50. Force of *Arms*. The like St. *Ambrose* relates of him-
self, that he caused the *Communion-Plate* of his
Church to be broke in Pieces, to redeem Christians
Phot. Nomocan. Τιτ. 6'. περ. ἐκκλης. χ᾽ σκευῶν, &c. κεφ. β. *p.* 43. taken captive by the Enemy; for which, though he
was blamed by the *Arian* Party, yet he elegantly
defends the Fact, as not only a justifiable, but a pro-
per and eminent Act of Charity. And indeed 'tis
the only Case wherein the *Imperial* Constitutions
make it lawful to *sell* or *pawn* the Plate and Gifts
belonging to the Church; it being otherwise made
Sacrilege to receive them, and the things absolutely
forfeited

forfeited by those that brought them. This was very great, but yet we meet with a *stranger* Charity than this in the Primitive Church; some that have parted with their own Liberty to purchase Freedom unto others. So St. *Clemens* assures us, in his famous Epistle to the *Corinthians*: *We have known many amongst our selves* (says he) *who have delivered themselves into Bonds and Slavery, that they might restore others to their Liberty; many who have hired out themselves Servants unto others, that by their Wages they might feed and sustain them that wanted.* Of which this one strange Instance shall suffice. Under the *Vandalick* Persecution, many *Christians* were carried Slaves out of *Italy* into *Africk*, for whose Redemption *Paulinus* then Bishop of *Nola* had expended his whole Estate; at last a Widow comes to him, intreats him to give her as much as would ransom her only Son, then Slave to the King of the *Vandals* Son-in-Law. He told her he had not one Penny left, nothing but his own Person, and that he would freely give her to make her best of, and to procure her Son's Ransom. This the Woman looked upon, from a Person of his Quality, as rather a *Deriding* her Calamity, than a *Pitying* of her Case: But he assured her he was in Earnest, and at last induced her to believe him; whereupon they both took Shipping for *Africk*, whither they were no sooner come, but the good Bishop addressed himself to the Prince, begged the Release of the Widow's Son, and offered himself in his Room. The Issue was, The Woman had her Son restored her, and *Paulinus* became the Prince's Slave, who employed him in the dressing and keeping of his Garden. How he afterwards ingratiated himself into the Favour of his Master, and came to be discovered to him who he was; how the Prince set him at Liberty, and gave him Leave to ask what he would, which he made no farther Use of than to

Chap. 2.

Pag. 70.

Greg. Mag. dial. lib. 3. c. 1 p. 98. Edit col. 1610.

Part III. beg the Releaſe of all his Country-men then in Bondage, which was accordingly granted, and all joyfully ſent home with ther Ships laden with Corn and Proviſions; I omit as not pertinent to my Purpoſe: They that are deſirous to know more of it, may read it in the Dialogues of St. *Gregory*, from whence I have borrowed the Story. This certainly was Charity with a Witneſs, an Act that will find more to admire and commend it, than to imitate and follow it.

A fourth Inſtance of Primitive Charity, was the great Care they took about the *Bodies* of the *Dead*, in giving them *decent*, and, where they could, *honourable* Burial. All Men naturally have a Kindneſs for their Bodies, and therefore deſire, That what has ſo long been the Manſion of an *immortal* Tenant, may upon its diſlodging be orderly taken down, and the Ruins of it laid up with Honour and Safety. Man's Body, beſides that it is the Cabinet of an invaluable Jewel, is a curious Piece of Artifice, *fearfully and wonderfully made*, the excellent Contrivance of the Divine Omniſcience, and in that reſpect challenges not to be carelelsly thrown aſide, or rudely trampled in the Dirt. This ſeems to be the common Senſe of Mankind, it being the Care and Practice of almoſt all Nations in the World, religiouſly to enſhrine the Remains of their deceaſed Friends in Tombs and Sepulchres; thinking it but reaſonable to teſtify ſo much Kindneſs to their departed Friends, as to honour their Memories, and to ſecure from rude barbarous Violence, what they left behind them when they put off Mortality. Sure I am, this was eminently the Care of *Chriſtians*; no Dangers or Threatnings could affright them from doing this Office to their deceaſed Brethren, eſpecially ſuch as had been *Martyrs* and *Champions* for the Truth. The *Roman* Clergy in an Epiſtle to them of *Carthage*, reckons it as one of the greateſt Inſtances of Charity, above

Epiſt. 2. inter Ep. Cyp. p. 9.

above that of relieving the Poor, ministring to the Sick, or the rest which they there enumerate and reckon up: tells them, That it could not be neglected without great Danger, and that Fidelity in this Matter would be highly acceptable to God, and rewarded by him. *Dionysius*, Bishop of *Alexandria*, speaking of the Plague that raged there (which was mentioned but now) commends the *Christians* for assisting their sick dying Brethren, that they closed their Eyes, laid them out, washed their Bodies, dressed and adorned them up for Burial, and carried them out upon their own Shoulders; which they cheerfully did, notwithstanding the imminent Danger that attended it, and that it was not long before others were called to do the same Offices for them. Their Bodies they decently committed to the Ground, for they abhorred the Custom so common among the *Gentiles* of *burning* the Bodies of the Dead; which they did, not (as the Heathens objected) because they thought that their Bodies once burnt to Ashes would be difficultly brought to a *Resurrection* (a Doctrine which they strenuously asserted, and held fast as the main *Pillar* of their Comfort and Confidence) but because they looked upon it as *inhuman* and *barbarous*, and contrary to the more ancient and better Usage of Mankind in this Matter. *Tertullian* calls this Way of Burial by *Inhumation*, a Piece of Piety, and tells us they abstained from burning the Corpse, not as some did, because they thought that some Part of the Soul remained in the Body after Death; but because it savoured of Savageness and Cruelty. Therefore their Enemies, to do them the greater Spite, did not only put them to death, but very often burnt their dead Bodies, and sprinkled their Ashes into the Sea; partly to hinder them from a decent Burial, and partly (as in that Tumult at *Alexandria* under *Julian*) that nothing might be left of them to be honoured

Chap 2.

Ibid. ubi supra.

Min. Fæl. p. 928.

De anim. c. 51. p. 303.

Am. Marcellin. lib. 22. p. 1627.

Part III. honoured as the Remains of Martyrs. As Christianity got Ground, this more civil Way of Inhumation did not only take Place, but rooted out the contrary Custom, even among the *Gentiles* themselves: For though the Emperor *Theodosius the Great* gives some Intimation of it, as remaining in his Time, yet not long after it wholly ceased; as is expressly acknowledged by *Macrobius*, who lived in the Time of the younger *Theodosius*.

Cod. Theod. l. 6. tit. 17. de Sep. viol.

Lib. 9. Saturnal. lib. 7. c. 7. p. 514.

Nor did they ordinarily content themselves with a bare Interment, but prepared the Body for its Funeral with costly *Spices*, and rich Odours, and Perfumes; not sparing the best Drugs and Ointments which the *Sabeans* could afford, as *Tertullian* plainly testifies. They who while alive generally abstained from whatever was curious and costly, when dead were embalmed and entombed with great Art and Curiosity. Whence *Eunapius* (much such a Friend to Christianity as *Julian* or *Porphyry*) derides the *Monks* and *Christians* of *Egypt* for honouring the seasoned and embalmed *Bones* and *Heads* of Martyrs; such (*says he*) as the Courts of Justice had condemned, and put to Death for their innumerable Villanies. This Cost the Christians, doubtless, bestowed upon the Bodies of their Dead, because they looked upon Death as the Entrance into a better Life, and laid up the Body as the *Candidate* and Expectant of a joyful and happy Resurrection. Besides, hereby they gave some Encouragement to Suffering, when Men saw how much Care was taken to honour and secure the Reliques of their Mortality, and that their Bodies should not be persecuted after Death.

Apol. l. 42. p 34.

De vit. Philos. in vit. Ædes. p. 65.

Act. SS. Tharac. Prob. & Andron. apud Baron. ad Ann. 299. tom. 2.

This their Enemies knew very well, and therefore many times denied them the Civility and Humanity of Burial, to strike the greater Dread into them. Thus *Maximus* the President threatned *Tharacus* the Martyr, That although he bore up his Head so high upon

upon the Confidence, that after his Death his Body should be wound up and embalmed with Ointments and odoriferous Spices; yet he would defeat his Hopes, by causing his Body to be burnt, and sprinkling his Ashes before the Wind. Chap 2.

Thus, after they had put *Polycarp* to death, they burnt his Body out of spite to the *Christians*, who had begged it of the Proconsul, only to give it a solemn Interment; whereupon gathering his Bones, which the Mercy of the Fire had spared, they decently committed them to the Earth, and there used to meet to celebrate the Memory of that pious and holy Man. *Euseb. H. Eccl. lib.* 4. *c.* 15. *p.* 135

During those Times of Persecution, they were very careful to bury the Bodies of the *Martyrs*, some making it their particular Business by Stealth to inter those in the Night, who had suffered in the Day: This they did with great Hazard and Danger, many of them (as appears from the ancient *Martyrologies*) suffering Martyrdom upon this very Account. Afterwards, when the Church was settled, there was a particular Order of Men called *Copiatæ*, (either ἀπὸ τῦ κοπιᾶσαι, from the *Pains* they took, or else ἀπὸ τῦ κοπάζειν, because they committed the Bodies of the Dead to the Grave, the Place of *Ease* and *Rest*) appointed for this Purpose about the Time of *Constantine*, or to be sure his Son *Constantius*, in two of whose Laws they are expressly mentioned, and in the latter said to be lately instituted. Their Office (as *Epiphanius* tells) was to wrap up and bury the Bodies of the Dead, to prepare their Graves, and to inter them: And because Inhumation and giving Burial to the Dead was ever accounted, in a more peculiar manner, a Work of Piety and Religion, therefore these Persons were reckoned, if not strictly *Clergymen*, at least in the Clergy-relation, being in both Laws of *Constantius* enumerated with, and invested *Cod. Theod. lib.* 13. *tit.* 1. *de Lustr. Con. l.* 1. *Lib.* 16. *tit.* 2. *de Episc. l.* 15. λόγ. σύνλογ. & περ. *p.* 465.

Part III. vested in the same Immunities with the Clergy. By the Author in St. *Hierom* they are stiled *Fossarii*, Grave-makers, and by him placed in the first and lowest Order of the *Clerici*, and exhorted to be like good old *Tobit* in Faith, Holiness, Knowledge, and Vertue. In the great Church of *Constantinople* they were called *Decani*, or *Deans* (but quite distinct from the *Palatine Deans*, spoken of in the *Theodosian Code*, and frequently elsewhere; who were a military Order, and chiefly belonged to the *Emperor*'s Palace) they were one of the *Collegia*, or Corporations of the City. Their Number was very great; *Constantine* is said to have appointed no less than MC. of them: But by a Law of *Honorius* and *Theodosius*, they were reduced to DCCCCL; till afterwards *Anastasius* brought them back to their former Number, which was also ratified and confirmed by *Justinian*. Their particular Duties and Offices, both as relating to the Dead, and all other Things, are largely described in two *Novel* Constitutions of his to that Purpose.

De Sept. Ordin. Eccl. tom. 4 p. 81

Lib. 6. tit. de Decanis l. 1.

Lib. 1. C. tit. 2. de SS. Eccles. l. 4.

Novel. Justin. 43. p. 114. & 59. p. 134.

Nor did they only take Care that the Body might be prepared for its Funeral, but to provide for it a decent and convenient *Sepulcher*, wherein it might be honourably and securely laid up; a Thing which had been always practised by the more sober and civilized Part of Mankind. The Burying-places (called *Polyandria*, *Cryptæ*, *Arenaria*, but most commonly *Cœmeteria* or *Dormitories*, because, according to the Notions which the Scriptures give us of the Death of the Righteous, *Christians* are not so properly said to *die* as to *sleep in the Lord*, and their Bodies to *rest* in the Grave in Expectation of a joyful Resurrection) were generally in the *Fields* or *Gardens*; it being prohibited by the *Roman* Laws, and especially an ancient Law of the XII *Tables*, to bury within the City Walls. This held for some Centuries after

Apud. Cic. de leg. lib. 2. p. 288. vol. 4.

after *Christianity* appeared in the World, and longer it was before they buried within Churches; within the *Out-parts* whereof to be interred, was a Privilege at first granted only to *Princes* and Persons of the greatest Rank and Quality. *Chrysostom* assures us, That *Constantius* the *Emperor* reckoned he did his Father *Constantine the Great* a peculiar Honour, when he obtained to have him buried in the *Porch* of the Church, which he had built at *Constantinople*, to the Memory of the *Apostles*, and wherein he had earnestly desired to be buried, as *Eusebius* tells us; and in the same, many of his Successors were interred: It not being in Use then, nor some hundred Years after, for Persons to be buried in the *Body* of the Church, as appears from the *Capitula* of *Charles the Great*, where Burying in the Church, which then it seems had crept into some Places, is strictly forbidden.

Hom 26. in Cap. 12. 2. ad Cor. p. 929.

De vit. Const. lib. 4. c. 71. p. 562.

Lib. 1. cap. 159. fol. 27. p. 1.

During the first Ages of *Christianity*, while the Malice of their Enemies persecuted them both *alive* and *dead*, their *Cœmeteria* were ordinarily *under Ground*; imitating herein the Custom of the *Jews*, whose Sepulchers were in Caverns and Holes of Rocks; though doubtless the *Christians* did it to avoid the Rage and Fury of their Enemies, not so much upon the Account of *Secrecy*; for their frequent retiring to those Places was so notorious, as could not escape the Observation of their Enemies, and therefore we sometimes find the *Emperor*'s Officers readily coming thither; but it was upon the Account of that *Sacredness* and Religion that was reckoned to be due to Places of this nature; it being accounted by all Nations a Piece of great Impiety, *Manes temerare sepultos*, to disturb and violate the Ashes of the Dead. They were large *Vaults* dug in dry sandy Places, and arched over, and separated into many little *Apartments*, wherein on either side the Bodies

Part III. of the Martyrs lay in distinct Cells, each having an *Inscription* upon Marble, whereon his *Name*, *Quality*, and probably the Time and *Manner* of his Death were engraven: Though in the Heats of Persecution they were forced to bury great Numbers together in one common Grave; (LX *Prudentius* tells us he observed;) and then not the Names, but only the Number of the Interred was written upon the Tomb. Indeed the Multitudes of Martyrs that then suffered, required very large Conveniencies of Interment. And so they had; insomuch, that the last Publisher of the *Roma Subterranea* assures us, That though those *Cœmeteria* were under Ground, yet were they many times double, and sometimes treble, two or three Stories one still under another.

Prudent. Peri. Steph. Pass. Hippol. Mart. Hym. 11. *p.* 139.

Lib. 1. *c.* 2. *num.* 9. *p.* 4.

By reason thereof they must needs be very dark, having no Light from without, but what peeped in from a few little Crannies, which filled the Place with a Kind of sacred Horrour, as St. *Hierom* informs us; who, while a Youth, when he went to School at *Rome*, used upon the Lord's-day to visit these solemn Places. Built they were by pious and charitable Persons (thence called after their Names) for the Interment of Martyrs, and other Uses of the Church: For in these Places *Christians* in Times of Persecution were wont to hide themselves, and to hold their Religious Assemblies, when banished from their Publick Churches, as I have formerly noted. Of these about *Rome* only, *Baronius* out of the Records in the *Vatican* reckons up XLIII, and others to the Number of *threescore*. We may take an Estimate of the rest by the Account which *Baronius* gives of one called the *Cœmetery* of *Priscilla*. discovered in his Time, *An.* 1578, in the *Via Salaria* about three Miles from *Rome*, which he often viewed and searched: It is (*says he*) strange to report, the Place by reason of the Vastness and Variety of Apartments,

Comment. in c. 40. *Iezekiel, tom.* 5. *p.* 521.

Ad Ann. 226. *tom* 2.

Ad Ann. 130. *vid. ad Ann.* 57. *tom.* 1. *num.* 112.

partments, appearing like a *City under ground*. At the Entrance into it there was a principal Way, or Street much larger than the reſt, which on either hand opened into divers other Ways, and thoſe again divided into many leſſer Ways and Turnings, like Lanes and Alleys within one another. And as in Cities there are void open Places for the *Markets*; ſo here there were ſome larger Spaces for the holding (as occaſion was) of their religious Meetings, wherein were placed the *Effigies* and Repreſentations of Martyrs, with Places in the Top to let in *Light*, long ſince ſtopt up. The Diſcovery of this Place cauſed great wonder in *Rome*, being the moſt exact and perfect *Cemetery* that had been yet found out. Thus much I thought good to add upon occaſion of that ſingular Care, which Chriſtians then took about the Bodies of their Dead. If any deſire to know more of theſe venerable Antiquities, they may conſult *Onuphrius de Cœmeteriis*, and eſpecially the *Latin* Edition of the *Roma Subterranea*, where their largeſt Curioſity may be fully ſatisfied in theſe Things. *Edit. a Paul. Aringio. Rom.* 1651 *& Co'.* 1659.

Chap. 2.

Many other Inſtances of their Charity might be mentioned; their ready entertaining Strangers, providing for thoſe that laboured in the Mines, marrying poor Virgins, and the like; of which to treat particularly, would be too vaſt and tedious. To enable them to do theſe charitable Offices, they had not only the extraordinary Contributions of particular Perſons, but a common *Stock* and Treaſury of the Church. At the firſt going abroad of the Goſpel into the World, ſo great was the Piety and Charity of the Chriſtians, that *the Multitude of them that believed were of one Heart, and of one Soul, neither ſaid any of them, that ought of the Things which he poſſeſſed was his own, but they had all Things common; neither was there any among them that lacked: For as many as were Poſſeſſors of Lands or Houſes, ſold them, and brought*

Part III. *brought the Prices of the Things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles Feet, and Distribution was made unto every Man according as he had need.* But this Community of Goods lasted not long in the
1 *Cor.* 16. 1, 2. Church: We find St. *Paul* giving order to the Churches of *Galatia* and *Corinth* for *weekly Offerings for the Saints; that upon the first Day of the Week* (when they never failed to receive the Sacrament) *they should every one of them lay by him in Store according as God hath prospered him.* This Custom, *Justin Martyr*
Apol. 2. *p.* 98, 99. assures us, still continued in his Time: For describing the Manner of their Assemblies on the *Lord's-Day*, he tells us, That those who are able and willing contributed what they saw good; and the Collection was lodged in the Hands of the *Bishop* or *President*, and by him distributed for the Relief of Widows and Orphans, the Sick or Indigent, the Imprisoned or Strangers, or any that were in need. In the next Age they were reduced to Monthly Offerings, as
Ap. l. c. 39. *p.* 31. appears from *Tertullian*, who gives us this Account of them in his Time; That at their Religious Assemblies upon a Monthly Day (or oftener if a Man will, and be able) every one according to his Ability laid by somewhat for charitable Uses, (they put it into a kind of *poor Man's Box*, called *Arca*, that stood in the Church) this they did freely, no Man being forced or compelled to it; leaving it behind them as a Stock to maintain Piety and Religion: For 'tis not spent (says he) upon Feasts or Drinking-Bouts, or to gratify Gluttony and Intemperance, but laid out in relieving the Needy, burying the Dead, providing for Orphans, supporting the Aged, recruiting the Spoiled, supplying the Imprisoned, and those that were in Mines, Bonds, or Slavery for the Profession of Christianity.

Histor. Lausiac. c. 35. *p.* 41. This was the Fruit of Primitive Devotion! *Palladius* tells us of two Brothers, *Paesius* and *Esaias*,

Sons

Sons of a wealthy Merchant, That their Father being dead, and they resolving upon a more strict and religious Course of Life, could not agree upon settling their Estates in the same Way. At last dividing their Estates, they disposed them thus: The one gave away his whole Estate at once, settling it upon *Monasteries*, *Churches*, and *Prisons*, for the Relief of such as were in Bonds; and betaking himself to a Trade for a small Maintenance for himself, gave himself up to Prayer, and the severer Exercises of Religion. The other kept his Estate in his own Possession, but built a *Monastery*, and taking a few Companions to dwell with him, entertained all *Strangers* that came that way, took Care of the *Sick*, entertained the *Aged*, gave to those that needed, and every *Saturday* and *Lord's-Day* caused two or three Tables to be spread for the Refreshment and Entertainment of the *Poor*; and in this excellent Way spent his Life. Chap. 2.

Now that this Account that we have given of the admirable Bounty and Charity of the antient Christians is not *precarious*, and merely what the Christians tell us of themselves, we have the Testimony of two open Enemies of Christianity, *Julian* and *Lucian*, both bitter Enemies to Christians, and the fiercer, because both, as 'tis supposed, Apostates from them: And their Testimony is considerable upon a double Account, partly because having lived amongst the Christians, they exactly knew their Ways and Manners; and partly because being Enemies to them, they would be sure to speak no more in their Commendation than what was true. *Julian* speaking of the *Galileans*, tells us, That by their Charity to the Poor they begot πολὺ τῆς ἀθεότητος θαῦμα, the greatest Admiration of their Religion in the Minds of Men. And in an Epistle to the *High-Priest* of *Galatia*, bewailing the desolate State of the *Misopog.* p. 99.

Hea-

Part III. *Heathen World*, the Ruin of their Temples, and the great Declenſion of *Paganiſm* at that Time, notwithſtanding all his Endeavours to make it ſucceed under the Influences of his Government; he adviſes the High-Prieſt to promote the *Gentile* Intereſt by the ſame Method, which the wicked Religion of the Chriſtians did thrive by, *i. e.* by their Bounty to *Strangers*, their Care in *burying* of the Dead, and their *Holineſs* of Life And elſewhere, *The Poor* (ſays he) *having no Care taken of them, the wicked* Galileans *know very well how to make their Advantage of it; for they give themſelves up to Humanity and Charity, and by theſe plauſible and inſinuative Ways, ſtrengthen and increaſe their wicked and pernicious Party: Juſt as Men cheat little Children with a Cake, by two or three of which they tempt them to go along with them, till having got them from home, they clap them under Hatches, tranſport and ſell them; and ſo for a little ſeeming Pleaſure, they are condemned to Bitterneſs all their Life: And no otherwiſe* (ſays he) *'tis with them, they firſt inveigle honeſt-minded Men with what they call their Feaſts of Love, Banquets, Miniſtery and Attendance upon Tables, and then ſeduce them into their Wickedneſs and Impiety.* This, as at once it ſhews his *Venom* and Malice according to the Humour of the Man, ſo it openly bears Witneſs out of the Mouth of an Enemy, to the moſt excellent and generous Spirit of the Goſpel. The other Teſtimony is that of *Lucian* (who if not a *Chriſtian* himſelf, for *Suidas*'s Δημηγόρῳ ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ does no way intimate him to have been a *Chriſtian* Preacher, notwithſtanding what the Generality of Writers have inferred thence; was yet however intimately acquainted with the Affairs of *Chriſtians*) who bringing in his Philoſopher *Peregrinus*, amongſt other Sects joining himſelf to the *Chriſtians*, tells us what Care they took of him; when caſt into Priſon, they improved

Epiſt. 49 *ad Arſac. oper. par.* 2. *p.* 203.

Fragm. Epiſt. par. 1. *p.* 557.

In voc. Λουκιανὸς.

De mort. Peregrin. p. 762, 763. *tom.* 2.

proved all their Interest to have him released: But when this could not be granted, they officiously used all possible *Service* and Respect towards him; in the Morning, old Women, Widows, and Children flocked early to the Prison-Doors; and the better Sort got leave of the Keepers to sleep with him in the Prison all Night: Then they had several Sorts of *Barquets*, and their *Sacred Discourses*. Nay, some were sent in the Name of the rest, even from the Cities of *Asia* to assist and encourage him; who brought him great Sums of *Money*, under pretence of his Imprisonment: It being incredible what Readiness they shew, when any such Matter is once noised abroad, and how little they spare any Cost in it. After which he tells us of them in general, That they equally contemn all the Advantages of this Life, and account them common, foolishly taking up their *Principles* about these Things without any *accurate* Search into them; insomuch that if any *subtle* and *crafty* Fellow, that knows how to improve his Advantage, come amongst them, he grows very rich in a little Time, by making a Prey of that simple and credulous People. Chap. 2. *Ibid. p.* 764.

There's one Circumstance yet behind, concerning the *Love* and *Charity* of those Times, very worthy to be taken Notice of; and that is the universal Extent of it: They *did good to all, though more especially to them of the Houshold of Faith*; *i. e.* to Christians. They did not confine their Bounty merely within the narrow Limits of a *Party*, this or that Sect of Men, but embraced an Object of Love and Pity, wherever they met it. They were kind to all Men, yea to their bittereſt Enemies, and that with a Charity as large as the *Circles* of the Sun, that visits all Parts of the World, and shines as well upon a *stinking* Dunghill, as upon a pleasant Garden. 'Tis certainly the strange and supernatural Doctrine of our Saviour,

You

Part III. *You have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour, and hate thine Enemy: But I say unto you, love your Enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.* This indeed is the *proper* Goodness and Excellency of *Christianity*, as *Tertullian* observes; it being *common* to all Men to *love* their Friends, but peculiar only to *Christians* to love their *Enemies*. *Athenagoras*, I remember, principally makes use of this Argument to prove the *Divinity* of the *Christian* Religion, and challenges all the great Masters of Reason and Learning among the *Heathens* to produce any, either of themselves or their Disciples, of so pure and refin'd a Temper, as could instead of *hating*, *love* their Enemies, bear *Curses* and *Revilings* with an undisturbed Mind, and instead of *reviling* again, to *bless* and *speak well* of them, and to *pray* for them who lay in wait to take away their Lives. And yet this did *Christians*; they embraced their Enemies, pardoned and prayed for them; according to the *Apostle*'s Rule, *When their Enemy hungred they fed him, when he thirsted they gave him Drink, and would not be overcome of Evil, but overcame Evil with Good.* When *Nazianzen* (then Bishop of *Constantinople*) lay sick, a young Man came to his Bed's feet, and taking hold of his Feet, with Tears and great Lamentation passionately begged Pardon of him for his Wickedness; the Bishop asking what he meant by it, was told, That this was the Person that had been suborned by a wicked Party to have murdered him, and now being stricken with the Conscience of so great a Wickedness, came to bewail his Sin. The good Man immediately prayed to *Christ* to forgive him, desiring no other Satisfaction from him, than that henceforth he would *forsake* that Heretical Party, and sincerely serve God as became a *Christian*. Thus when *Paul* the

Ad Scap. c. 1. p. 69.

Leg. pro Christian. p. 11.

Vit. ejus per Greg. Presb.

the Martyr was hastening to his Execution, he only begged so much Respite till he might pray (which accordingly he did) not only for the Peace and Happiness of *Christians*, but for the Conversion of *Jews* and *Samaritans*; for the *Gentiles*, that they might be brought out of Errour and Ignorance to the Knowledge of God and the true Religion: He prayed for the People that attended his Execution; nay (such was his vast Goodness and Charity) for the very *Judge* that condemned him; for the *Emperors*, and the very *Executioner* that stood ready to cut off his Head, earnestly begging of God *not to lay that great Wickedness to their Charge*. Nay, they did not think it enough *not to return Evil for Evil*, or barely to forgive their Enemies, unless they did them all the *Kindness* that lay in their Power. *Polycarp* plentifully *feasted* the very Officers that were sent to apprehend him; the same which St. *Mamas* the Martyr is also said to have done, treating the Soldiers with the best Supper he had, when sent by *Alexander*, the cruel President of *Cappadocia*, to seize upon him. And we read of one *Pachomius*, an Heathen Soldier, in the first Times of *Constantine*, That the Army being well near starved for want of necessary Provisions, and coming to a City that was most inhabited by *Christians*, they freely and speedily gave them whatever they wanted for the Accommodation of the Army. Amazed with this strange and unwonted Charity, and being told, that the People that had done it were *Christians*, whom they generally preyed upon, and whose Profession it was *to hurt no Man, and to do good to every Man*; he threw away his Arms, became an *Anchoret*, and gave up himself to the strictest Severities of Religion. This also *Julian* the Emperor plainly confesses; for urging *Arsacius*, the Chief Priest of *Galatia*, to take Care of the Poor, and to build Hospitals in every City for

Chap. 2.

Euseb. de Mart. Paul. c. 8. p. 332.

Eus. l. 4. c. 15. p. 130. Mart. ejus apud. Sur. ad 17 Aug. tom. 4. ex. S. Metaph. Metaphr. in vit. Pachom. apud Sur. ad diem 14 Maii, to. 3.

Ubi prius.

Part III. for the Entertaining of poor Strangers and Travellers, both of their own and other Religions; he adds, *For it's a Shame* (says he) *that when the* Jews *suffer none of theirs to beg, and the wicked* Galileans *relieve not only their own, but also those of our Party, that we only should be wanting in so necessary a Duty.* So prevalent is Truth, as to extort a Confession from its most bitter and virulent Opposers. Of this I shall only add one Instance or two more, proper enough to be inserted here. *Eusebius*, speaking of that dreadful Plague and Famine that happened in the *Eastern* Parts under the Emperor *Maximinus*, wherein so many whole Families miserably perished, and were swept away at once; he adds, That at this Time the Care and Piety of the *Christians* towards all, evidently approved it self to all the *Gentiles* that were about them; they being the only Persons that during this sad and calamitous State of Things performed the real Offices of *Mercy* and *Humanity*; partly in ordering and *burying* of the Dead, (Thousands dying every Day, of whom no Care was taken) partly in gathering together all the *Poor* that were ready to starve, and distributing Bread to every one of them: The Fame whereof filled the Ears and Mouths of all Men, who extolled the *God of the Christians*, and confessed that they had shewed themselves to be the only truly Pious and Religious Persons. And indeed the Charity was the more remarkable, in that the *Christians* at this very Time were under a most heavy Persecution. Thus in the terrible Plague that in the Times of *Gallus* and *Volusian* raged so much through the whole World (and that more or less for Fifteen Years together) especially at *Carthage*, when innumerable Multitudes were swept away every Day, and the Streets filled with the Carcases of the Dead, which seemed to implore the Help of the *Living*, and

Hist. Eccl. l. 9. c. 8. p. 357.

to

to challenge it as their Right by the common Laws of Human Nature; but all in vain, every one trembling, flying and shifting for themselves, deserting their neareſt Friends and Kindred, none staying, unless it were to make a Prey. In this sad and miserable Case, *Cyprian* (then Bishop of the Place) calls the *Christians* together, instructs them in the Duties of Mercy and Charity, puts them in mind, that it was no great wonder if their Charity extended to their *own Party*; the way to be *perfect*, was to do something *more* than *Heathens* and *Publicans*; *to overcome Evil with Good*; to imitate the Divine Benignity, *to love our Enemies*, and (according to our *Lord*'s Advice) *to pray for the Happineſs of them that perſecute us*: That God continually made his *Sun* to *riſe*, and his *Rain* to *fall*, not only for the Advantage of his *own* Children, but for all other Men's; and that therefore they should imitate the Example of such a *Father*, who profeſſed themselves to be his *Children*. Immediately upon this, they unanimously agreed to assist their common Enemies, every one lending help according to his Rank and Quality. Those who by reason of their Poverty could contribute nothing to the Charge, did what was more; they personally wrought and laboured, an Assistance beyond all other Contributions. By which large and abundant Charity great Advantage redounded not to themselves only *of the Houſhold of Faith*, but universally unto all.

Chap. 2.

Pont. in vit. Cypr. p. 13.

I shall sum up what hath been said upon this Argument, in that elegant Discourse which *Lactantius* hath concerning Works of Mercy and Charity. Since human Nature (*says he*) is weaker than that of other Creatures, who come into the World armed with Offensive and Defensive Powers, therefore our Wise Creator has given us a tender and merciful Disposition, that we might place the *Safeguard* of our Lives in mutual Assistances of one another.

Lact. Epitom. c. 7. *p.* 746.

Part III. For being all created by *one God*, and ſprung from one common *Parent*, we ſhould reckon our ſelves *a-kin*, and obliged to love all Mankind; and (that our Innocency may be perfect) not only not to do an *Injury* to another, but not to revenge one when done to our ſelves; for which reaſon alſo we are commanded to *pray for our very Enemies*. We ought therefore to be kind and ſociable, that we may help and aſſiſt each other. For being our ſelves obnoxious to Miſery, we may the more comfortably hope for that help in caſe we need it, which our ſelves have given unto others. And what can more effectually induce us to relieve the Indigent, than to put our ſelves into their *ſtead*, who beg help of us? If any be hungry, let us *feed* him; is he naked, let us *clothe* him; is he wronged by a powerful Oppreſſor, let us *reſcue* and relieve him. Let our Doors be open to *Strangers*, and ſuch who have not where to lay their Head. Let not our Aſſiſtance be wanting to *Widows* and *Orphans*: And (which is a mighty Inſtance of Charity) let us *redeem* the Captives, *viſit* and aſſiſt the Sick, who are able to take no Care of themſelves; and for Strangers, and the Poor (in caſe they die) let us not ſuffer them to want the Conveniency of a *Grave*. Theſe are the Offices and the Works of Mercy, which whoever does, offers up a true and grateful Sacrifice to God; who is not pleaſed with the *Blood of Beaſts*, but the *Charity of Men*: Whom therefore he treats upon their own Terms, has *Mercy* on them whom he ſees *merciful*, and is *inexorable* to thoſe who *ſhut up their Bowels* againſt them that ask them. In order therefore to our thus pleaſing God, let us make light of Money, and tranſmit it into the *heavenly* Treaſures, *where neither Moth nor Ruſt doth corrupt, nor Thieves break through and ſteal*, nor Tyrants are able to ſeize and take it from us; but where it ſhall be kept to our Eternal Advantage under the *Cuſtody* of God himſelf.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of their Unity and Peaceableness.

The Laws of Christ tend to beget a Peaceable Disposition. This seen in our Saviour himself, in his Apostles, and the whole Body of Christians. The Account Justin Martyr *gives of them. The World over-run with Quarrels before Christ's Coming. The happy Alteration that succeeded upon his appearance in it. This particularly urged by* Eusebius, *How much Christians contributed to the Peace and Quietness of the World. Their Unity among themselves. Canonical Epistles; the several Sorts of them;* Συναδικαὶ, Ἀποστολικαὶ, Εἰρηνικαὶ. *What their Nature and Tendency. Differences presently endeavoured to be healed. The great Care and Sollicitude of* Constantine *that way. An eminent Instance of Condescension and Self-denial in* Gregory Nazianzen *for the Peace of the Church. Difference in Rituals and lesser Matters no hindrance of Peace and Christian Communion: Manifested in the Case of* Polycarp *and* Anicetus *Bishop of* Rome. *Christians not provoked by every trifling Quarrel. The difference in this respect between them and the best Philosophers.*

THE Primitive Christians being of such a Meek, Compassionate, and Benevolent Temper as we have represented them, it cannot be

Part III. thought but that they were of a very quiet Disposition and *peaceable* Conversation; and the having been so large in that, will excuse me for being shorter in this. When our blessed *Saviour* came to establish his Religion in the World, he gave a *Law* suitable to his *Nature*, and to the *Design* of his Coming into the World, and to the Exercise of his Government, as he is *Prince of Peace*; a Law of Mildness and Gentleness, of Submission and Forbearance towards one another. We are commanded to *follow Peace with all Men*; *to follow after the Things that make for Peace*; *as much as in us lies to live peaceably with all Men.* We are forbidden all Feuds and Quarrels; enjoined *not to revenge our selves, but to give place unto Wrath*; *to let all Bitterness, and Wrath, and Anger, and Clamour, and Evil-speaking be put away from us, with all Malice*; *to be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake forgives us.* These are the Laws of *Christianity*, which whenever they are duly entertained, produce the most gentle and *good-natured* Principles, the most innocent and quiet Carriage. This eminently appeared in the Life of our Blessed Saviour, who was the most incomparable Instance of *Kindness* and *Civility*, of *Peace* and *Quietness*; we never find him all his Life treating any with Sharpness and Severity but the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, who were a Pack of surly, malicious, *ill-natured* Fellows, and could be wrought upon by no other Methods; otherwise his Mildness and Humility, the Affability and Obligingness of his Conversation, and his remarkable *Kindness* to his greatest Enemies, were sufficiently obvious both in his Life and Death: And such was the Temper of his Disciples and Followers, this excellent Spirit (like *Leaven*) spreading it self over the whole Mass of *Christians*, turning *the Bryar*

into

into a Myrtle-Tree, and the Vulture into a Dove. See the Account which *Justin the Martyr* gives of them. We who formerly valued our Money and Estates before all Things else, do now put them into a common *Stock*, and distribute them to those that are in need. We, who once hated each other, and delighted in mutual Quarrels and Slaughters, and according to the Custom refused to sit at the same Fire with those who were not of our own *Tribe* and Party; now, since the Appearance of Christ in the World, live familiarly with them, *pray for our Enemies*, and endeavour to perswade those that unjustly hate us, to order their Lives according to the excellent Precepts of *Christ*, that so they may have good Hope to obtain the same Rewards with us from the great Lord and Judge of all Things. Chap. 3. *Ap. 2. p. 61.*

But for the better Understanding of this, it may be useful to observe what a remarkable Alteration in this respect the *Christian* Religion made in the World. Before *Christ's* Coming, the World was generally over-run with *Feuds* and Quarrels, mighty and almost implacable Animosities and Divisions reigning amongst *Jews* and *Gentiles*; the *Jews* looked upon the *Gentiles* as *Dogs* and *Out-casts*, refused all Dealings with them, even to the Denial of Courtesies of common Charity and Civility, such as to *tell a Man the Way*, or to give *him a Draught of Water*; they reproached them as the vilest and most profligate Part of Mankind, *Sinners of the Gentiles*, as the *Apostle* calls them, according to the usual Stile and Title. Nor did the *Gentiles* less scorn and deride the *Jews*, as a pitiful and contemptible Generation, stopping their Noses, and abhorring the very Sight of them, if by chance they met them; they looked upon them as an *unsociable* People, as *Enemies* of all Nations, that did not so *Joh. 4. 9. Juv. Sat. 14. p. 430. Gal. 2. 15.*

Part. III. much as *wish well* to any; nay, as *Haters* even of Mankind; as *Tacitus* and their Enemies in *Josephus* represent them. The Effect of all which was, that they oppressed and persecuted them in every Place, trod them as Dirt under their Feet, till at the last the *Romans* came, and finally took away *both their Place and Nation.* Thus stood the Case between them till the Arrival of *the Prince of Peace*; who partly by his *Death*, whereby he *broke down the Partition-Wall* between *Jew* and *Gentile*; partly by the healing Nature and Tendency of his *Doctrine*; partly by the quiet and peaceable Carriage of his Followers, did quickly *extirpate* and remove those mutual Feuds and Animosities, and silence those passionate and quarrelsome Divisions that were amongst them.

Hist. lib. 5. cap. 4, 5. p. 535. Ἔθνος ἄμικτον, ἀσύμφυλον, ἥκιστα θρησκείαν τὴν αὐτὴν τοῖς ἄλλοις ἔχον, ἥκιστα νόμοις χρώμενον ὁμοίοις, ἐχθρὸν δὲ καὶ τοῖς ἔθεσι, καὶ ἐπισπεύμασι τῷ σῷ λαῷ καὶ ἅπασιν ἀνθρώποις —— δυσμενὲς ἔθνος, καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀλλόκοτον.
Jos. Antiq. Judaic. lib. 11. c. 6. Vid. Esther. 3. 8. Vid. Cic. pro Flac. p. 368. tom. 2.

Præpar. Evang. l. 1. c. 4. p. 10, 11. Vide Athanas. de Verb. Incarn. p. 78. tom. 1.

This Argument *Eusebius* particularly prosecutes, and shews, That while the Nations were under *Paganism* and *Idolatry*, they were filled with Wars and Troubles, and all the Effects of barbarous Rage and Fury: But that after the Divine and Peaceable Doctrine of our Saviour came abroad, those Differences and Calamittes began to cease, according to the Predictions that were of him, That *there should be Righteousness and Abundance of Peace in his Days*; *that Men should beat their Swords into Ploughshares, and their Spears into Pruning-hooks*; *that Nation should not lift up Sword against Nation, nor learn War any more*: That this must needs be in some measure the Effect of his Appearance; his Doctrine being so fitly calculated to soften the rough and brutish Manners of Men, and to train them up in milder and more humane

humane Institutions. And a little after, he makes it an uncontroulable Argument of the Truth and Excellency of the *Christian* Doctrine, That it teaches Men to bear the Reproaches and Provocations of Enemies with a generous and unshaken Mind, and to be able not to revenge our selves, by falling foul upon them with the like Indignities and Affronts; to be above Anger and Passion, and every inordinate and unruly Appetite; to administer to the Wants and Necessities of the Helpless, and to embrace every Man as our Kindred and Country-man; and though reputed a Stranger to us, yet to own him, as if by the Law of Nature he were our nearest Friend and Brother. How much their Religion contributed to the Publick Tranquillity, by forbidding *Pride*, *Passion*, *Covetousness*, and such Sins as are the great Springs of Confusion and Disturbance, *Justin Martyr* tells the Emperors: As for Peace (says he) we above all Men in the World promote and further it; forasmuch as we teach, That no Wicked Man, no Covetous or Treacherous Person, no Good or Vertuous Man can lie hid from the Eye of God; but that every Man is travelling either towards an Eternal Happiness or Misery, according to the Desert and Nature of his Works: And did all Men know and believe this, no Man would dare for a few Moments to deliver up himself to Vice and Wickedness, knowing it would lead him on to the Condemnation of Everlasting Fire; but would rather by all Means restrain himself, and keep within the Bounds of Vertue, that he might obtain the Rewards that are dispensed by God, and avoid the Punishments that are inflicted by him. The truth is, our blessed *Lord* came not to inspire Men with Principles of Revenge and Passion, to teach them to *return Evil for Evil*, but to encourage Love and Gentleness, to teach Men to overcome

Chap. 3.

Ap. 2. *p.* 59.

Part III. by Suffering, and to obtain the Reward by Meekness and Patience, *Isidore* the *Pelusiote*, treating of that place, *To him that smites thee on the right Cheek, turn the other also*, has this short Discourse upon it: The great *King* of *Heaven* came down from above to deliver to the World the Laws of an Heavenly Conversation; which he has proposed in a Way of Conflict and Striving, quite contrary to that of the *Olympick* Games. There, he that fights and gets the better, receives the *Crown*; here, he that is stricken and bears it meekly, has the Honour and Applause: There, he that returns Blow for Blow, here, he that *turns the other Cheek* is celebrated in the *Theatre of Angels*; for the Victory is measured not by Revenge, but by a wise and generous Patience. This is the *new Law* of Crowns, this is the new Way of Conflicts and Contentions.

Ep. 127. *l.* 3. *p.* 269.

Such was the Temper, such the Carriage of *Christians* towards their *Enemies*, and them that were without: Within themselves they maintained the most admirable Peace and Harmony, and were in a manner *of one Heart and Soul.* They lived in the strictest Amity, and abhorred all Division as a Plague and Fire-brand. But because Mens Understandings not being all of one *Size*, nor all Truths alike plain and evident, Differences in Mens *Judgements* and *Opinions* must needs arise; no Schism ever arose in the Church about any of the more considerable Principles of Religion, but it was presently bewailed with the universal Resentment of all pious and good Men, and the Breach endeavoured to be made up; no ways left unattempted, no Methods of Persuasion omitted that might contribute to it.

When *Novatus* (or rather *Novatian*) had made some *Disturbance* in the *Church of Rome*, concerning the Receiving the lapsed into Communion, *Dionysius* (the good Bishop of *Alexandria*) writes to him to extin-

Euf. Hist. Eccl. l. 6. *c.* 45. *p.* 247.

extinguish the Schism; telling him, 'Tis better to suf- Chap. 3.
fer any thing than that the Church of God should be
rent in Pieces: That it's no less glorious, and proba-
bly more illustrious, to suffer Martyrdom to keep
Divisions out of the Church, than to die for not sa-
crificing to Idols; for in the one Case a Man suffers
Martyrdom only upon his own Account, but in the
other, he suffers for the Advantage and Benefit of the
whole Church. And *Cyprian* positively asserts (ac-
cording to the Apostle's Resolution of the Case) *De Unit. Eccl. p.* 184.
That without this Unity and Charity *a Man cannot enter into Heaven*; and that although he should de-
liver up himself to the *Flames*, or cast his Body to
wild Beasts, yet this would not be the Crown of his
Faith, but the Punishment of his *Falshood*; not the
glorious *Exit* of a religious Vertue, but the Issue of
Despair: Such an one may be *killed*, but he cannot
be *crowned*.—He that rents the Unity of the *Church*,
destroys the *Faith*, disturbs the *Peace*, dissolves *Cha-
rity*, and profanes the *Holy Sacrament*. How severe-
ly they branded all Schism and Division in the *Church*,
how *industriously* they laboured to take up all Con-
troversies amongst *Christians*, and to reconcile dis-
senting Brethren, to maintain Concord and Agree-
ment amongst *themselves*, and to prevent all Occasi-
ons of Quarrel and Dissention, might easily be made
appear out of the Writers of those Times. Hence
those *Canonical* Epistles (as they called them) where-
with Persons were wont to be furnished, when going
from one Place to another; of which there were es-
pecially three Sorts. First, Συστατικαὶ, or *Commenda-
tory* Epistles, mentioned by St. *Paul*, and were in
use amongst the Heathens. They were granted to
Clergy-men going into another *Dioceſs*, by the Bishop
that ordained them, testifying their Ordination,
their Soundness and Orthodoxy in the Faith, the In-
nocency and Unblamableness of their Lives. To
those

Part III. those that had been under, or had been ſuſpected of *Excommunication*, declaring their Abſolution, and recommending them to be received in the number of the *faithful*. Laſtly, they were granted to all, whether *Clergy* or *Laity*, that were to *travel*, as *Tickets* of *Hoſpitality*, that where-ever they came, upon producing theſe Letters they might be known to be *Catholick* and *Orthodox*, and as ſuch received and entertained by them. A Piece of Prudence which *Julian* the *Apoſtate* admired in the *Chriſtian* Conſtitution, the like whereto he endeavoured to eſtabliſh in his Pagan Reformation. The ſecond Sort were Ἀπολυτικαὶ, Letters *Dimiſſory*, whereby Leave was given to Perſons going into another Dioceſs, either to be *ordained* by the Biſhop of that Place, or if ordained already, to be admitted and *incorporated* into the Clergy of that Church. Upon which Account the antient *Councils* every where provide, That no Stranger ſhall either receive Ordination at the Hands of another Biſhop, or exerciſe any Miniſterial Act in another Dioceſs, without the Conſent and *Dimiſſory* Letters of the Biſhop of that Place from whence he comes. The third were Εἰρηνικαὶ, *Letters of Peace*, granted by the *Biſhop*, to the Poor that were oppreſſed, and ſuch as fled to the Church for its Protection and Aſſiſtance; but eſpecially to ſuch of the Clergy as were to go out of one Dioceſs into another: It being directed to the Biſhop of that Dioceſs, that he would receive him, that ſo he might take no Offence, but that peaceable Concord and Agreement might be maintained between them. By theſe Arts the Prudence of thoſe Times ſought to ſecure the Peace of the Church, and, as much as might be, prevent all Diſſentions that might ariſe: And where Matters of any greater moment fell out, how quickly did they flock together to compoſe and heal them?

Soz. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 5. c. 16. p. 617.

Naz. in Jul. 1. p. 102.

Hence thoſe many *Synods* and *Councils* that were conveened

convened to umpire Differences, to explain or *define Articles* of Faith, to condemn and suppress the Disturbers of the Church, and Innovators in Religion. What infinite Care did the good Emperor *Constantine* take for composing the *Arian* Controversies, which then began first to infect and overrun the World? How much his Heart was set upon it, his sollicitous Thoughts taken up about it; how many troublesome Days, and restless Nights it cost him; with what strong and Nervous Arguments, what affectionate Intreaties he presses it; may be seen in that excellent Letter (yet extant in his Life) which he wrote to the *Authors* of those impious and unhappy Controversies. But when this would not do, he summoned the great Council of *Nice*, consisting of *three hundred and eighteen Bishops*; and in his Speech at the opening of that Council, conjured them by all that was dear and sacred to agree, and to compose those Dissentions which were risen in the Church; which, he seriously protested, he looked upon as more grievous and dangerous than any War whatever, and that they created greater Trouble and Inquietude to his Mind, than all the other Affairs of his Empire. And when several of the Bishops then in Council, had preferred *Libels* and Accusations one against another, without ever reading them, he bundled and sealed them all up together, and having reconciled and made them Friends, produced the Papers, and immediately threw them into the Fire before their Faces. So passionately desirous was that good Prince to extinguish the Flames, and to redeem the Peace of the Church at any rate. Were any *ejected* and thrown out of the Church, of which there might be a Suspicion of private Grudges, or Designs, the *Nicene* Council wisely provided, That in every Province a *Synod* should be held twice a Year; where all

De vit. Const. l. 2. *c.* 64. & *seq. p.* 473.

Ib. l. 3. *c* 12. *p.* 489.

Part III. all the Bishops meeting together, might discuss the Case, and compose the Difference: Or (as *Joseph* the *Egyptian*, in his *Arabick* Version of that *Canon*, tells us) an *Arbitrator* was to be appointed between the differing Parties to take up the Quarrel, that it might not be a Scandal to Religion.

Nor did there want meek and peaceable-minded Men, who valued the *publick* Welfare before any *private* and personal Advantage, and could make their own particular Concerns strike Sail, when the Peace and Interest of the Church called for it. When great Contests and Confusions were raised by some perverse and unquiet Persons about the See of *Constantinople*, (then possessed by *Gregory Nazianzen*) he himself stood up in the Midst of the Assembly, and told the Bishops, how unfit it was, that they who were *Preachers* of Peace to others, should *fall out* amongst themselves; begged of them even by the *Sacred Trinity*, to manage their Affairs calmly and peaceably: And, *If I* (says he) *be the* Jonas *that raises the Storm, throw me into the Sea, and let these Storms and Tempests cease; I am willing to undergo whatever you have a mind to; and tho' innocent and unblameable, yet for your Peace and Quiet sake, am content to be banished the Throne, and to be cast out of the City: Only, according to the Prophet's Counsel, be careful to love Truth and Peace.* And therewith freely resigned his *Bishoprick*, though legally settled in it by the express Command and Warrant of the Emperor, and the universal Desires and Acclamations of the People.

Vit. Greg. Naz. per Greg. Presb.

The same excellent Temper ruled in St. *Chrysostom*, one of his Successors in that *See*; when having elegantly pressed the Unity of the Church, and refuted those petty Cavils which his Adversaries had made against himself: *But if you* (says he to his People) *suspect these Things of us, we are ready to deliver up our Place and Power to whomsoever you will; only*

Hom. 11. in Ep. ad Eph. p. 1110.

only let the Church be preserved in Peace and Unity. Chap 3.
This was the brave and Noble Disposition of Mind, to which St. *Clemens* sought to reduce the *Corinthians*, after they had fallen into a little Schism and Disorder; Who is there among you (says he) of that *generous* Temper, that *compassionate* and *charitable* Disposition? Let him say, if this *Sedition*, these *Schisms* and *Contentions* have arisen through my means, or upon my *account*, I'll depart and be gone whithersoever you please, and will do what the People shall command; only let *Christ's* Sheep-fold, together with the *Elders* that are placed over it, be kept in peace. *Ep. ad Cor. p.* 69.

Nay, when good Men were most zealous about the Main and Foundation-Articles of Faith, so as sometimes rather to hazard *Peace*, than to betray the *Truth*; yet in Matters of *Indifferency*, and such as only concerned the *Rituals* of Religion, they mutually bore with one another, without any Violation of that Charity which is the great Law of Christianity. Thus in that famous Controversy about the keeping of *Easter*, so much agitated between the *Eastern* and *Western* Churches, *Irenæus* in a Letter to *Pope Victor* (who of all that ever sate in that Chair, had raised the greatest stirs about it) tells him, That Bishops in former times, however they differed about the Observation of it, yet always maintained an intire *Concord* and Fellowship with one another: the Churches being careful to maintain a *peaceable* Communion, tho' differing in some particular Rites and Ceremonies; yea, even when their Rites and Customs seemed to clash, by meeting together at the same Place. Thus when *Polycarp* came to *Rome* from the *Churches* of the *East*, to treat with *Pope Anicetus* about this and some other Affairs, though they could not satisfy each other to yield the *Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l.* 5. *c.* 24. *p.* 193.

Controversy,

Part III. *Controverſy*, yet they *kiſſed* and embraced one another with mutual Endearments, received the *Holy Communion* together; and *Anicetus* (to do the greateſt Honour to *Polycarp*) gave him leave to celebrate and conſecrate the *Euchariſt* in his Church; and at laſt they parted in great Peace and Friendſhip: The Difference of the Obſervation not at all hindring the Agreement and Harmony of the *Churches*; it being agreed amongſt them by common Conſent (ſays *Sozomen* ſpeaking of this Paſſage) that in keeping this Feſtival, they ſhould each follow their own *Cuſtom*, but by no means break the *Peace* and *Communion* that was between them: For they reckoned it (ſays he) a very fooliſh and *unreaſonable* thing, that they ſhould fall out for a few Rites and Cuſtoms, who agreed in the main Principles of Religion.

Hiſt. Eccl. l. 7. *c.* 19. *p.* 734.

The *Chriſtians* of thoſe Times had too deeply imbibed that Precept of our Saviour, *Love one another as I have loved you*, to fall out about every nice and trifling Circumſtance; no, when highlieſt provoked and affronted, they could *forbear* and *forgive* their *Enemies*, much more their *Brethren*; and were not like the *waſpiſh Philoſophers* amongſt the *Heathens*, who were ready to fall foul upon one another for every petty and inconſiderable Difference of Opinion that was amongſt them. So *Origen* tells *Celſus*: Both amongſt your Philoſophers and Phyſicians (ſays he) there are *Sects* that have perpetual Feuds and Quarrels with each other; whereas we who have entertained the Laws of the Bleſſed *Jeſus*, and have learnt both to ſpeak and to do according to his Doctrine, *bleſs them that revile us*; *being perſecuted, we ſuffer it*; *being defamed, we intreat.* Nor do we ſpeak dire and dreadful things againſt thoſe that differ from us in *Opinion*, and do not preſently embrace thoſe Things which we have entertained; but

Lib. 5. *p.* 273.

but (as much as in us lies) we leave nothing unattempted that may perſwade them to change for the better, and to give up themſelves only to the Service of the Great Creator, and to do all things as thoſe that muſt give an account of their Actions. In ſhort, *Chriſtians* were careful not to offend either *God* or *Men*, but to keep and maintain Peace with both: Thence that excellent Saying of *Ephrem Syrus*, the famous Deacon of *Edeſſa*, when he came to die; *In my whole Life* (ſaid he) *I never reproached my Lord and Maſter, nor ſuffered any fooliſh Talk to come out of my Lips; nor did I ever curſe or revile any Man, or maintain the leaſt Difference or Controverſy with any Chriſtian in all my Life.* Chap. 3. *Vit. Ephr. Syr. per Greg. Nyſſ. tom. 2. p. 1033.*

CHAP. IV.

Of their Obedienoe and Subjection to Civil Government.

Magiſtracy the great Band of the Publick Peace. This highly ſecured by Chriſtianity. The Laws of Chriſt that way expreſs and poſitive. Made good in his own Practice, and the Practice of his Apoſtles. The ſame Spirit in ſucceeding Ages, manifeſted out of Juſtin Martyr, Polycarp, Tertullian, *and* Origen. *Praying for Rulers and Emperors a ſolemn part of their publick Worſhip. Their ready Payment of all Cuſtoms and Tributes, and their Faithfulneſs in doing it. Chriſtians ſuch even under the heavieſt Oppreſſions and Perſecutions, and that, when they had power to have righted and revenged*

venged themselves. An excellent Passage in Tertullian to that purpose. The Temper of the Christian Soldiers in Julian's Army. The famous Story of Mauricius, and the Thebæan Legion under Maximianus, reported at large out of Eucherius Lugdunensis. The Injustice of the Charge brought against them by the Heathens, of being Enemies to Civil Government. Accused of Treason. Of their refusing to swear by the Emperor's Genius. Their denying to sacrifice for the Emperor's Safety, and why they did so. Their refusing to own the Emperors for Gods, and why. Their not Observing the Solemn Festivals of the Emperors, and the Reasons of it. Accused of Sedition, and holding unlawful Combinations. An Account of the Collegia and Societies in the Roman Empire. Christianity forbidden upon that account. The Christian Assemblies no unlawful Conventions. A vast Difference between them and the unlawful Factions forbidden by the Roman Laws. Their confident Challenging their Enemies to make good one Charge of Disturbance or Rebellion against them: Their Laws and Principles quite contrary. The Heathens themselves guilty of Rebellions and Factions, not the Christians. The Testimony given them by Julian the Emperor. A Reflection upon the Church of Rome, for corrupting the Doctrine and Practice of Christianity in this Affair. Their Principles and Policies in this matter. Bellarmin's Position,

tion, That 'tis lawful to depose Infidel and Heretical Princes, and that the Primitive Christians did it not to Nero, Diocleſian, *&c. only becauſe they wanted Power, cenſured and refuted. This contrary to the avowed Principles of honeſt Heathens.* Chap. 4.

HOW much Chriſtian Religion, tranſcribed into the Lives of its Profeſſors, contributes to the Happineſs of Men, not only in their ſingle and *private* Capacities, but as to the *publick* Welfare of Human Societies, and to the common Intereſts and Conveniencies of Mankind; we have already diſcovered in ſeveral Inſtances. Now becauſe *Magiſtracy* and Civil Government is the great Support and Inſtrument of external Peace and Happineſs, we ſhall in the laſt Place conſider, how eminent the firſt Chriſtians were for their Submiſſion and Subjection to Civil Government. And certainly, there is ſcarce any particular Inſtance wherein *Primitive Chriſtianity* did more triumph in the World, than in their exemplary Obedience to the Powers and Magiſtrates under which they lived; honouring their Perſons, revering their Power, paying their Tribute, obeying their Laws, where they were not evidently contrary to the Laws of *Chriſt*; and were they were, ſubmitting to the moſt Cruel Penalties they laid upon them, with the greateſt Calmneſs and Serenity of Soul. The truth is, one great Deſign of the *Chriſtian* Law is to ſecure the Intereſts of *Civil* Authority. Our Saviour has expreſſely taught us, *That we are to give unto* Cæſar *the things that are* Cæſar's, *as well as unto God the things which are God's.* And his Apoſtles ſpoke as plainly as Words could ſpeak it, *Let every Soul be ſubject to the higher Powers; for there is no Power but of God: the Powers that be, are ordained of God.*

Part III. *Whosoever therefore resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves Damnation. Wherefore you must needs be subject, not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience sake. For, for this cause pay you Tribute also; for they are God's Ministers, attending continually upon this very Thing. Render therefore to all their Dues, Tribute to whom Tribute is due, Custom to whom Custom, Fear to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour.* Where we may take notice both of the *Strictness* and *Universality* of the Charge, and (what is mainly material to observe) this Charge given the *Romans*, at that time when *Nero* was their *Emperor*, who was not only a *Heathen* Magistrate, but the *first Persecutor* of *Christians*; a Man so prodigiously brutish and tyrannical, that the World scarce ever brought forth such a Monster, θηρίον ἐν μορφῇ ἀνθρώπου, as the Orator truly stiles him, *A Beast in the shape of a Man.* The same Apostle, amongst other Directions given to *Titus* for the Discharge of his Office, bids him *put the People in mind to be subject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magistrates.* St. *Peter* delivers the same Doctrine, to a tittle; *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the King as supreme, or unto Governours as unto them that are sent by him for the Punishment of evil-doers, and for the Praise of them that do well; for so is the Will of God, that with well doing you may put to silence the Ignorance of foolish Men.*

Themist. Orat. 5. *p.* 144.

Such are the *Commands*, and such was the *Practice* of *Christ* and his *Apostles*. When a *Tax* was demanded of him, though he was the *Son of God*, he refused not to pay *Tribute* unto *Cæsar*, even when it put him to the expence and charge of a Miracle. When arraigned for his Life at *Pilate*'s Bar, he freely owned his Authority, and chearfully submitted to that wicked and unrighteous Sentence, though able to command

mand more than *twelve Legions of Angels* for his Rescue and Deliverance. The *Apostles*, though unjustly scourged before the *Council*; yet made no tart Reflections, but *went away rejoycing*. When *Herod* had cut off St. *James*'s Head, and consigned *Peter* in Prison to the same Butchery and Execution, what *Arms* did the Christians use? rise up and put him out of the Throne, scatter *Libels*, raise *Tumults* or *Factions* in the City? Oh! no, the Church's weapons were *Prayers* and *Tears*, their only Refuge in those evil times. Chap. 4.

Nor did this excellent Spirit die with the Apostles; we find the same Temper ruling in the succeeding Ages of Christianity. The Christians (says one of the *Ancients*) obey the Laws that are made, and by the Exactness of their Lives, go *beyond* that Accuracy, which the Law requires of them; they love all Men though all Men study to afflict and persecute them. *Just Mart Epist ad Diogn. p.* 497.

Are there any (as *Athnegoras* concludes his Address to the *Emperors*) more devoted to you than we? who pray for the Happiness of your Government, that, according to Right and Equity, the *Son* may succeed his *Father* in the Empire, that your Dominions may be enlarged, and that all Things may prosper that you take in Hand: and this we do, as that which turns both to yours and our own Advantage, that so *under you leading a quiet and peaceable Life*, we may chearfully obey all those Commands which you lay upon us. *Leg. pro Christian. p.* 39.

St. *Polycarp*, a little before his Martyrdom, wrote to the *Christians* at *Philippi*, earnestly exhorting them to obey their Rulers, and to exercise all Patience and *Long-suffering* towards them. *Apud Eus. l.* 3. *c.* 36. *p.* 132.

And when he stood before the *Proconsul*, he told him, That this was the great Law of *Christianity*, that we are commanded by God to give all due Honour and Obedience to Princes and Potentates; such as is not *prejudicial* to us; *i. e.* (for so doubtless he means) such as is not *contrary* to the Principles of our Religion. *Ib. l.* 4. *c.* 15. *p.* 132.

Part. III. ligion. *Tertullian* tells us, 'Twas a ſolemn Part of the *Church-Service* in his Time, to pray for the Happineſs and Proſperity of the Princes under whom they lived: *We pray* (ſays he) *for the Emperors, for the Grandees and Miniſters of State, for the Proſperity of the Age, for the Quietneſs of Affairs, for the Continuance of their Lives and Government; that God would give them a long Life, a ſecure Reign, an undiſturbed Houſe, powerful Armies, faithful Senators, honeſt Subjects, a quiet People, and indeed whatever they can wiſh for, either as Men or Emperors.* They that think (ſays he) that we are not ſollicitous about the *Safety* of Princes, let them look into the Commands of God recorded in our *Scriptures*, which we freely expoſe to the View of all; there they will find that we are enjoined to *pray* for the *Happineſs* of our very *Enemies* and Perſecutors: And who are ſo much ſuch, as they? And yet we are plainly and particularly commanded to *pray for Kings, for Princes, and all that are in Authority, that the State of Things may be quiet and peaceable.* A Chriſtian being an *Enemy* to *no Man*, is much leſs to his *Prince*. Thus when *Celſus* ſeemed to object, as if the *Chriſtians* refuſed to help the *Emperors* in their Wars, *Origen* anſwers, That they did really aſſiſt and help them, and that rather with *Divine* than *Human* Weapons, according to the Command of the Apoſtle; *I exhort, that, firſt of all, Supplications, Prayers, Interceſſions, and Giving of thanks be made for all Men, for Kings and all that are in Authority.* And he tells him, That the more eminent any Man is for Piety and Religion, he will be able to afford greater Aſſiſtance to his Prince, than a great many armed Soldiers that ſtand ready to fight for him, and to deſtroy his Enemies.

Ap. c. 39. *p.* 31. *Ibid. c.* 31. *Lib.* 8. *p.* 426.

For all *Cuſtoms* and *Tributes*, none ever paid them more freely than they. For your *Taxes* and *Tributes* (ſays *Juſtin Martyr* to the *Emperors*) we are, above all

all other Men, every where ready to bring them in to your Collectors and Officers; being taught so to do by our great Master, who bad those that asked the question, Whether they might pay Tribute unto *Cæsar*? *to give unto* Cæsar *the things that are* Cæsar's, *and unto God the Things that are God's*. For which Reason we worship none but God: And as for you, in all other things we cheerfully serve you, acknowledging you to be *Emperors* and Governours of Men, and praying that, together with your Imperial Power, you may have a wise and discerning Judgement and Understanding. If the *Emperor* command me to pay Tribute (says another of their *Apologists*) I am ready to do it; if my *Lord* command me to serve and obey him, I confess my Obligation to it. Man is to be served with that Respect that is due to Man; but God only, who is invisible and incomprehensible is to be *religiously* feared and honoured: If commanded to deny him, I must disobey, and die rather than be found perfidious and ungrateful to him. So *Tertullian* tells them, That although they refused to pay Taxes rated upon them for Maintenance of the *Heathen Temples*, yet for all other Tributes they had cause to give the *Christians* thanks for so faithfully paying what was due, it being their Principle to abstain from defrauding of others; insomuch, that should they examine their Accounts how much of the Assessments was lost by the Fraud and Couzenage of them of their own Party, they would easily find that the *Christians* denial to pay that one Tax, was abundantly compensated and made up in their honest Payment of all the rest. The truth is, they were admirably exact and conscientious, as in all their Actions, so especially in those that related to the Publick, and concerned their Duty and Obedience to their Rulers and Governours.

Chap. 4.

Tatian Orat. contra Græc. p. 144.

Ap. c. 42. *p.* 34.

Nor were they thus only in *prosperous* Times,

Part III. but under the heavieſt Perſecutions; as indeed the Rod was ſeldom off their Backs. The laſt mentioned *Apologiſt* bids their Judges go on to butcher them, and tells them, they did but force thoſe *Souls* out of their *Bodies*, which were praying to God for the Emperor's Happineſs, even while their Officers were doing it. And *Cyprian* tells the *Proconſul*, That as badly as they were uſed, yet they ceaſed not to pray for the Overthrow and Expulſion of the common Enemies, for ſeaſonable Showers, and either for the removing or mitigating Publick Evils; begging of God day and night, with the greateſt Inſtance and Importunity, for the Peace and Safety of their Perſecutors; endeavouring to pacify and propitiate God, who was angry with the Iniquities of the Age. Nor were they thus kind and good-natured, thus ſubmiſſive and patient, for *want* of Power, and becauſe they knew not how to help it: *Tertullian* anſwers in this Caſe, That if they thought it lawful to *return evil for evil*, they could in *one Night*, with a few *Firebrands*, plentifully revenge themſelves; that they were no ſmall and inconſiderable Party, and that they needed not to betake themſelves to the little Arts of skulking Revenges, being able to appear in the capacity of open Enemies; that though of but Yeſterday's ſtanding, yet they had filled all Places, all *Offices* of the Empire; and what Wars were they not able to manage, who could ſo willingly give up themſelves to be ſlain, did not the Law of Chriſtianity oblige them to be *killed* rather than to *kill*? Nay, that they need not take up Arms and rebel; for their Party was ſo *numerous*, that ſhould they but agree together to leave the *Roman Empire*, and to go into ſome remote Corner of the World, the Loſs of ſo many Members would utterly ruin it; and they would ſtand amazed and affrighted at that Solitude and Deſolation that would enſue upon it, and have more *Enemies* than

Cap. 30. *p.* 27.

Ad Demet. p. 202.

Ap. c. 37. *p.* 30.

than loyal *Subjects* left amongst them: whereas now they had the fewer *Enemies*, for having so many *Christians*. Chap. 4.

The *Christians* then opposed not their Enemies with the Points of their *Swords*, but with solid *Arguments* and mild Intreaties. Thus when *Julian* the *Emperor* urged in his Army, which was almost wholly made up of *Christians*, to wicked Counsels and the practices of Idolatry, they withstood him only with *Prayers* and *Tears*; accounting this (says my Author) to be the *only* Remedy against Persecution. So far were they from resisting or rebelling, that they could quietly *die* at the *Emperor's* Command, even when they had power lying at their foot. I cannot in this place omit the memorable Instance of the *Thebæan Legion*, being so exceedingly *apposite* and pertinent to my purpose, and so remarkable as no Age can furnish out such another Instance. I shall set down the Story entirely out of the Author himself, the Account of their Martyrdom written by *Eucherius* Bishop of *Lyons*, who assures us he received the Relation from very credible hands; and it is thus:

Naz. in vect. 1. in Jul. p. 94.

Mart. SS. Marcii & Socior. ab Eucher. Lugdunens. conscript. apud Sur. ad diem 22. Sept. p. 220. &c Edit. Color. 1618.

Maximianus Cæsar (whom *Diocleſian* had lately taken to be his Collegue in the *Empire*) a bad Man, and a bitter Persecutor of the *Christians*, was sent into *France*, to suppress a Mutiny and Rebellion risen there. To strengthen his Army, there was added to it a Band of *Christians*, called the *Thebæan Legion*, consisting (according to the manner of the *Romans*) of *six thousand six hundred sixty six* faithful, expert and resolute Soldiers. Coming to *Octodurus* (a Place in *Savoy*) and being ready to offer Sacrifice to the Gods, he causes his Army to come together, and commands them under a great Penalty to swear by the *Altars* of the Gods, that they would unanimously fight against their Enemies,

Part III. mies, and persecute the *Christians* as *Enemies* to the Gods: Which the *Thebæan Legion* no sooner understood, but they presently withdrew to *Agaunum*, (a Place eight Miles off, called at this day St. *Maurits*, from *Mauricius* the Commander of the *Legion*, a Place equally *pleasant* and *strong*, being encompassed about with craggy and inaccessible Rocks) to avoid, if it might be, the wicked and sacrilegious Command, and to refresh themselves, tired with so long a March. But the Emperor taking Notice of the Army as they came to swear, quickly missed the *Legion*; and being angry, sent Officers to them to require them forthwith to do it: who enquiring what it was they were commanded to do, were told by the Messengers, That all the Soldiers had offered Sacrifices, and had taken the fore-mentioned Oath, and that *Cæsar* commanded them to return presently and do the like. To whom the Heads of the Legion mildly answered, That for this reason they left *Octodurus*, because they had heard they should be forced to sacrifice; that being *Christians*, and that they might not be defiled with the Altars of *Devils*, they thought themselves obliged to worship the *living* God, and to keep that Religion which they had entertained in the *East*, to the last Hour of their Life: That as they were a *Legion*, they were ready to any Service in the War; but to return to him to commit Sacrilege, as he commanded, they could not yield.

With this Answer the Messengers returned, and told the Emperor, that they were resolved not to obey his Commands; who being transported with Anger, began thus to vent his Passion: *Do my Soldiers think thus to slight my Royal Orders, and the holy Rites of my Religion? Had they only despised the Imperial Majesty, it would have called for publick Vengeance; but together with the Contempt of me, an Af-*

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front is offered to Heaven, and the Roman Religion is as much despised as I am. Let the obstinate Soldiers know, That I am not only able to vindicate my self, but to revenge the Quarrel of my Gods. Let my faithful Servants make haste, and dispatch every Tenth Man, according as the fatal Lot shall fall upon him. By this equal Death, let those whose Lot it shall be to die first, know how able Maximian *is severely to revenge both himself and his Gods.* With that the Command is given, the *Executioners* sent, the Emperor's Pleasure made known, and every *Tenth* Man is put to death; who chearfully offered their Necks to the Executioners, and the only Contention amongst them was, who should *first* undergo that glorious Death. This done, the *Legion* is commanded to return to the rest of the Army. Whereupon *Mauricius* the General of the *Legion*, calling it a little aside, thus bespake them: I congratulate (most excellent *Fellow-Soldiers*) your *Courage* and Valour, that for the Love of *Religion*, the Command of *Cæsar* has made no Impression upon you; you have seen your Fellow-Soldiers, with Minds full of Joy, undergoing a glorious Death: How much afraid was I, lest being armed (and how easy is it for such to do so) you should, under a Pretence of *defending* them, have endeavoured to hinder their happy Funerals?--- See, I am encompassed round with the Bodies of my Fellow-Soldiers, whom the dismal Executioner has torn from my Side; I am besprinkled with the Blood of the *Saints*; my Clothes dyed with the *Reliques* of their sacred *Blood:* And shall I doubt to follow their *Death*, whose *Example* I so much congratulate and admire? Shall I concern my self to think what the *Emperor* commands, who is equally subject to the same Law of Mortality with my self?— I remember we once took this *military Oath*, that with the utmost Hazard of our Lives we would

Chap 4.

Part III. would defend the Common-wealth; this we then engaged to the *Emperors*, though no *heavenly* Kingdom was promiſed to us: And if we could promiſe this out of *Devotion* to a military Service, what then is to be done when Chriſt promiſes ſo much to them that engage with him? Let us willingly expoſe our Lives to this moſt precious Death; let us ſhew a maſculine Courage and an unviolated Faith. Methinks I ſee thoſe bleſſed Souls ſtanding before *Chriſt*'s Tribunal, whom the *Emperor*'s Officer juſt now baniſhed out of their Bodies: That's the true Glory which will recompenſe the ſhortneſs of this Life with a bleſſed Eternity. Let us by the Meſſengers unanimouſly return this Anſwer to the Emperor: *We acknowledge*, Cæſar, *that we are your Soldiers, and took up Arms for Defence of the Empire; nor did we ever baſely betray our Truſt, or forſake our Station, or deſerved that the Brand either of Fear or Cowardice ſhould be ſet upon us; nor ſhould we ſtick now to obey your Commands, did not the Laws of Chriſtianity, wherein we have been inſtructed, forbid us to worſhip Devils, and to approach the polluted Altars of the Gods. We underſtand you are reſolved either to defile us with ſacrilegious Worſhip, or to terrify us with a Decimation: Spare any further Search concerning us; know we are all Chriſtians, our Bodies we yield ſubject to your Power, but our Souls we reſerve intire for Chriſt the Author, and the Saviour of them.*

This was no ſooner ſpoken, and univerſally agreed to by the *Legion*, but it was carried to the *Emperor*; who, exaſperated with ſuch a generous Reſolution, commanded a *ſecond Decimation*, which was immediately executed, and the reſt, as before, commanded to return to *Octodurus*. Hereupon *Exuperius* the *Enſign*, catching up his Colours, thus addreſſed himſelf to them: You ſee me (*moſt excellent Fellow-Soldiers*)

Soldiers) holding these *Ensigns* of secular Warfare: But these are not the *Arms* that I call you to, these are not the Wars to which I excite your Courage and Valour; 'tis another kind of Fighting that we are to chuse; they are not these *Swords* that must make our Way into the *Heavenly Kingdom*; we stand in need of an undaunted Mind, and invincible Defence, a maintaining the Faith which we have given to God, to the very last.——Let the dismal Executioner go and carry this Message to his bloody Master, and tell him thus: We are, O *Emperor*, *your Soldiers*, but withal, (which we freely confess) the *Servants of God*; to you we owe military *Service*, to him *Innocency*; from you we have received *Wages* for our Labours, from him we had our very *Lives* and *Beings*: We cannot herein *obey* the Emperor, so as to *deny* God, the Author of our Lives, yea, and of yours too, whether you will or no. Nor is it, Sir, any Despair (which is always stoutest in greatest Straits) that makes us thus resolute against you; we have (you see) *Arms*, and yet make no Resistance, chusing rather to *die* than to *overcome*, and desirous rather to perish *innocent*, than to live rebellious and revengeful. If you have a mind to appoint us to any greater and severer Torments, we are ready for them. *Christians* we are, and therefore cannot persecute those that are so. You must needs acknowledge the unconquerable Courage of this *Legion*: We throw down our Arms; your Officer will find our Right Hands naked, but our Breast armed with a true Catholick Faith. Kill us, and trample on us, we undauntedly yield our Necks to the Executioner's Sword: These Things are the more pleasant to us, while setting light by your sacrilegious Attempts, we hasten apace to the Heavenly Crown. Chap. 4.

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Maximianus being told this, and despairing now to break their Constancy, commands his whole Army to fall upon them, and cut them off; which they did accordingly, without any Difference of Age or Person, mangling their Bodies, and then taking the Spoils: The *Emperor* having so appointed, that whoever killed any of the *Legion*, should have the Spoils of him whom he killed. And thus they died with their Swords in their Hands, when they might have preserved their Lives (especially in a Place so advantageous) by force of Arms, or to be sure have sold them at the deareſt Rate. This Story I have been willing to set down the more at large, because so remarkable in all its Circumstances, and containing the most unparallelled Instance of Christian Piety and Submission, (next to that of our Blessed *Saviour*) that I think was ever known in the World.

Menol. Gr. ἐν ἡμερ. κς. Ἰᾳ. *sub. lit.* λ.

This is the Account of those *noble* Martyrs; only, to prevent Mistakes, we are to take Notice, that there was another *Mauritius* Commander of a *Legion* in the *East* (mentioned in the *Greek Menologies*) who together with Seventy of his Soldiers was condemned by, and suffered under this self-same Emperor *Maximianus*, for refusing to do Sacrifice; their Martyrdom being recorded by *Simeon Metaphrastes*, but the Account quite different both as to *Persons* and *Things* from that which is here related.

Apud. Sur. ad diem 28. *Jul. tom.* 4.

By what has been said, we may see the Injustice of that Charge which the *Heathens* sometimes laid upon the *Christians*, that they were *Disturbers* of the Peace, and *Enemies* to Civil Government; an Indictment so purely false, and without any Shadow of a real Pretence to cover it, that the *ingenious* Heathen in *Minutius Fælix* (though raking up all the Calumnies he could find, and putting the deepest Dye upon every Charge which Wit and Eloquence could put upon it) yet had not the Face so much as

as once to mention it. But however, as groundless as it was, they were frequently charged with it. Sometimes they were accused of *Disloyalty* and Treason, either because they would not *swear* by the Emperor's *Genius*, or not sacrifice for his *Safety*, or not worship the *Emperors* as *Divi*, or Gods, or not celebrate their *Festivals* in the same way with others. For the first, their refusing to *swear* by the Emperor's *Genius*, we have heard before what *Tertullian* answers to it, That it was in Effect to give *divine* Honour to *Devils*. To the second, their not *sacrificing* for the Emperor's *Safety*, he answers, That none *sacrificed* to so good Purpose as they, for that they offered up Prayers to the True, Living and Eternal God, for the Safety of the *Emperor*; that God whom the *Emperors* themselves did above all others desire should be propitious and favourable to them, as from whom they knew they derived their Government. For the third, their refusing to own the *Emperors* for Gods, he tells them, They could not do it, partly because they would not lye in saying so, partly because they durst not by doing it *mock* and deride the *Emperor*; nay, that he himself would not be willing to be stiled *God*, if he remembered that he was a *Man*, it being Man's Interest to yield to God: That the Title of *Emperor* was great enough, and that he could not be called *God*, without being denied to be Emperor; that he was therefore *Great*, because *less* than Heaven; and that if he would needs be a *Deity*, he must first conquer *Heaven*, lead *God* in Triumph, set *Guards* in Heaven, and impose *Tribute* upon that Place. For the last, their not observing the solemn *Festivals* of the *Emperors*, for which they were accounted Enemies to the Publick, they pleaded, That their Reigion and their Conscience could not comply with that *Vanity*, that *Luxury*, and *Debauchery*, and all

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Ap. c. 30. *p.* 27.

Ib. c. 33. *p.* 28. *Vide Theoph: Antioch. l.* 1. *p.* 76.

Ib. c. 30.

Ib. c. 35. *p.* 28.

Part. III. all manner of Excesſ and Wickedneſs that was committed at thoſe Times; that the publick Joy was expreſſed by that which was a publick *Diſgrace*, and thoſe things accounted *honourable* upon the *ſolemn* Days of Emperors, which were *unfit* and uncomely to be done upon *any* Days; and that there was little Reaſon they ſhould be accuſed for not obſerving that, where *Looſeneſs* of Manners was accounted *Loyalty*, and the Occaſion of *Luxury* a part of *Religion*.

Otherwhiles they were accuſed of *Sedition*, and holding *unlawful Combinations*, which aroſe upon the Account of their Religious Aſſemblies, which their Enemies beheld as *Societies* erected contrary to the *Roman* Laws. That we may the better apprehend what theſe *Societies* were, (in the number whereof they reckoned the *Chriſtian Meetings*) and how condemned by the *Roman* Laws, we are to know, That in the Infancy of the *Roman* Commonwealth, *Numa Pompilius*, to take away the Difference between the *Sabines* and the *Romans*, divided the People into *Colleges* and little Corporations, (anſwerable to which are our *City-Companies*) according to their ſeveral *Trades* and Occupations, Goldſmiths, Dyers, Potters, Curriers, *&c.* which together with the City, increaſed to a great Number; (*Panciroll* out of both *Codes* gives us Account of thirty ſix) to theſe he aſſigned their ſeveral Halls, Times of Meeting, and ſacred Rites, and ſuch Immunities as were moſt proper for them. But beſides theſe appointed by Law, ſeveral *Colleges* in imitation of them were erected in the moſt parts of the *Empire*, partly for the more convenient Diſpatch of Buſineſs, but principally for the Maintenance of mutual Love and Friendſhip. All theſe *Societies* had their ſolemn Meetings, and cuſtomary *Feaſts*, which in time degenerated into great Excesſ and Luxury; inſomuch

Plut. in vit. Num. p. 71.

Append. ad Notit. Imper. fol. 197.

insomuch that *Varro* in his time complained, that the Excess and Prodigality of their Suppers made Provisions dear; and much more Reason had * *Tertullian* to complain of it in his time. Answerable to these *Colleges* amongst the *Romans*, were the ἑταιρίαι or *Societies* amongst the *Grecians*, who also had their stated and common Feasts; such were the ἀνδρεῖα amongst the *Grecians*, the συσσίτια at *Lacedæmon*, and so in other States of *Greece*. But these Meetings (those of them especially that were not settled either by the Decree of the *Senate*, or the Constitution of the Prince) partly by reason of their Number, and the great Confluence to them, partly by reason of their luxurious Feasting, began to be looked upon by the State with a jealous Eye, especially after that the *Common-wealth* was turned into a *Monarchy*; the Emperors beholding them as fit *Nurseries* to plant and breed up treasonable and rebellious *Designs*, and therefore frequently forbad them under very *severe* Penalties. Thus *Julius Cæsar*, who first laid the Foundation of the Empire, reduced these *Colleges* to the antient Standard, putting down all that were *supernumerary* and *illegal*; wherein he was also followed by his Successor *Augustus*: And the succeeding Emperors very often put out strict *Edicts* against them, prohibiting them as dangerous and unlawful Combinations.

Under the Notions of these *Societies* it was, that the *Christian* Congregations came to be forbidden; several Persons confederated into a Combination, and constantly meeting at a common Feast, rendring them suspicious to their Enemies. Hence *Pliny* giving the Emperor an Account of the *Christians*, and especially of their assembling at their solemn Feasts of Love, tells him, That they had forborn ever since, according to his Commands, he had

* *Collegiorum cœnæ immutabiles intendunt annos tam. Var. apud Jac. Gothofr. in C. Th. l. 16. tit. 10. l. 20.*

* *Apol. c. 39. p. 32.*

Vide l. 47. ff. tit. 22. de colleg. & corporib. Sueton. in vit. Jul. Cæs. c. 42. p. 50. in Aug. c. 32. p. 155.

Lib. 10. Ep. 7.

Part III. had publiſhed an *Edict* to forbid the *Hetæriæ* or *Societies*. And indeed the *Chriſtian* Aſſemblies, whereat they uſually had the *Lord's Supper*, and their *Love-feaſts*, looking ſomewhat like thoſe *illegal* Meetings, (eſpecially as beheld with the Eye of an *Enemy*) it was the leſs wonder, if the Heathens accuſed them of hatching Treaſon, and the Magiſtrates proceeded againſt them as Contemners and Violators of the Law.

But to this the *Chriſtians* anſwered, That their *Meetings* could not be accounted amongſt the *unlawful Factions*, having nothing common with them; that indeed the Wiſdom and Providence of the State had juſtly prohibited ſuch Factions to prevent Seditions, which might thence eaſily over-run and diſquiet all Councils, Courts, Pleadings, and all Meetings whatſoever. But no ſuch thing could be ſuſpected of the *Chriſtian* Aſſemblies, who were frozen as to any *ambitious Deſigns* of Honour or Dignity, Strangers to nothing more than publick Affairs, and had renounced all Pretences to *external Pomps* and Pleaſures: That if the *Chriſtian* Aſſemblies were like others, there would be ſome reaſon to condemn them under the Notion of Factions; but to whoſe Prejudice (ſay they) did we ever *meet* together? We are the ſame when *together*, that we are when *aſunder*; the ſame *united*, as is every *ſingle* Perſon, hurting no Man, grieving no Man; and therefore that when ſuch honeſt, good, pious, and chaſte Men meet together, it was rather to be called a *Council* than a *Faction*. To which *Origen* adds, That ſeeing in all their Meetings they ſought nothing but Truth, they could not be ſaid to conſpire againſt the *Laws*; ſeeing they deſigned nothing but to get from under the Power and Tyranny of the *Devil*, who had procured thoſe Laws only to eſtabliſh his Empire faſter in the World.

Tert. Apol. c. 38. p. 30.

Ib. c. 39. p. 32.

Cont. Celſ. l. 1. p. 5.

For

For elsewhere he bids *Celsus*, or any of his Party, shew any thing that was *seditious* amongst *Christians*: That their Religion arose not at first (as he falsely charged it) out of Sedition, might appear in that their *Legislator* had so severely forbidden Killing and Murder; and that the Christians would never have entertained such mild Laws, as gave their Enemies opportunities to kill them like Sheep delivered to the Slaughter, without making the least Resistance. Thus *Arnobius* confidently challenges the *Heathens*, Whether they could reject *Christianity* upon the account of its raising Wars, Tumults, and Seditions in the World? No, those were Things which they may find nearer home. You *defame* us (says *Tertullian*) with Treason against the *Emperor*, and yet never could any *Albinians*, *Nigrians*, or *Cassians* (Persons that had mutinied and rebelled against the Emperors) be found amongst the *Christians*; they are those that swear by the Emperor's *Genius*, that have offered Sacrifice for their Safety, that have often condemned Christians; these are the Men that are found Traitors to the *Emperors*. A Christian is no Man's Enemy, much less his *Prince's*; knowing him to be constituted by God, he cannot but love, revere, and honour him, and desire that he and the whole *Roman* Empire may be safe, as long as the World lasts. We worship the *Emperor*, as much as is either *lawful* or *expedient*, as one that is next to God; we *sacrifice* for his Safety, but 'tis to his and our God; and so as he has commanded, *only* by Holy Prayer: for the great God needs no Blood or sweet Perfumes; these are the *Banquets* and Repast of *Devils*, which we do not only *reject*, but expel at every turn. But to say more concerning this, were to light a *Candle* to the *Sun*. * *Julian* the Emperor (though no good Friend to *Christians*, yet) thus far does them right, That if they see any

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Lib. 3. *p.* 115.

Adv. Gent. l. 2. *p.* 20

Ad Scap. c. 2. *p.* 69.

* Ἴλλην ἐς τις εἰς τὸν Βασιλέα ἐπίδοιεν ἀπ ἀκινάτας, ἀυτίκα μάλα κολάζειν. *Julian. Fragm. Ep. oper. c.* 1. *p.* 528.

Part III. one *mutinying* against his *Prince*, they presently *punish* him with great Severities.

And here we may with just reason reflect upon the Iniquity of the Church of *Rome*, which in this Instance of Religion has so abominably debauched the Purity and Simplicity of the *Christian* Faith. For they not only exempt the *Clergy* (where they can) from the Authority and Judgement of the *secular* Powers, whereby horrible Enormities do arise; but generally teach, That a Prince once *excommunicated*, his Subjects are absolved from all Fealty and Allegiance, and he may with Impunity be deposed or made away. How shall such a Prince be thundered against with Curses and Deprivations; every bold and treacherous *Priest* be authorized to brand his Sacred Person with the odious Names of *Infidel*, *Heretick* and *Apostate*; and be *Apostolically* licensed to slander and *belibel* him, and furnished with Commissions to free his Subjects from their Duty and Allegiance, and to allure them to take up Arms against him? And if these Courses fail, and Men still continue loyal, they have Disciples ready by *secret* or *sudden* Arts to send him out of the World. And if any Man's Conscience be so nice as to boggle at it, his Scruples shall be removed; at worst, it shall pass for a *venial* Crime, and the *Pope* perhaps, (with the Help of a Limitation, that it be done for the Interest of the *Catholick* Cause) by his *Omnipotence* shall create it meritorious.

De Rom. Pont. l. 5. c. 7. Col. 891. Cardinal *Bellarmine* (whose Wit and Learning were imployed to uphold a tottering Cause) maintains it stiffly, and in express Terms, That if a *King* be an *Heretick* or an *Infidel* (and we know what they mean by that, nay, he particularly names the *reformed* Princes of *England* amongst his Instances) and seeks to draw his Dominions unto his Sect; it is not only *lawful*, but *necessary*, to deprive him of

of his Kingdom. And although he knew that the whole Course of Antiquity would fly in the face of so bold an *Assertion*, yet he goes on to assert, That the Reason why the *Primitive Christians* did not attempt this upon *Nero*, *Diocleſian*, *Julian* the Apoſtate, and the like, was not out of *Conſcience*, or that they boggled out of a Senſe of Duty, but becauſe they wanted *Means* and Power to effect it. A bold Piece of Falſehood, this and how contrary to the plain and poſitive Laws of *Chriſt*, to the meek and *Primitive* Spirit of the Goſpel! But by the *Cardinal's* leave, it could not be for want of Power; for if (as *Seneca* obſerves) he may be Maſter of any Man's Life that undervalues his own, it was then as eaſy for a *Chriſtian* to have ſlain *Nero*, or *Diocleſian*, as it was of later Times for *Gerard* to piſtol the Prince of *Orange*, or *Ravillac* to ſtab the King of *France*. Nay, take one of his own Inſtances, *Julian* the *Apoſtate*, a Prince bad enough, and that left no Method unattempted to ſeduce his Subjects to *Paganiſm* and *Idolatry*: yet though the greateſt Part of his Army were Chriſtians, they never ſo much as whiſpered a treaſonable Deſign againſt him, uſing no other *Arms* (as we noted out of *Nazianzen*) but *Prayers* and *Tears*. Had St. *Paul* been of their Mind, he would have told the Chriſtian *Romans* quite another Story, and inſtead of bidding them be ſubject to *Nero*, *not only for Wrath, but for Conſcience ſake*, would have inſtructed them to take all Opportunities to have murdered or depoſed him. But I ſhall not reckon up the Villanies they have been guilty of, of this kind, nor purſue the odious and pernicious Conſequences of their Doctrine and Practice. Thus much I could not but take notice of, being ſo immediately oppoſite to the whole Tenour of the Goſpel, and ſo great a Scandal to Chriſtianity. And I verily believe, That had the Primitive Chriſtians been no

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Ep. 4. p. 9.

Part III. better *Subjects* than their *Emperors* were *Princes*; had they practised on them those bloody Artifices which have been common amongst those that call themselves the only *Catholicks*; that barbarous Dealing would have been a greater curb to the flourishing of the Gospel, than all the *ten* Persecutions. For how could an impartial *Heathen* ever have believed their Doctine to have been of God, had their Actions been so contrary to all Principles of Natural Divinity? Sure I am, *Pagan Rome* was in this case more *Orthodox*; and their *Pontifices* far better *Doctors of Divinity*. Their *Lex Julia* (as *Ulpian*, their great Lawyer tells us) allotted the same Penalty to *Sacrilege* and *Treason*; placing the one the very next step to the other: thereby teaching us, That they looked upon Treason against the Prince, as an Affront next to that which was immediately done *against* the Majesty of Heaven. And *Marcellus*, the great Statesman in *Tacitus*, lays it down for a *Maxim*, That *Subjects may wish for good Princes, but ought to bear with any*. And shame it is, that any should call themselves *Christians*, and yet be found worse than they; their Principles and Practices more opposite to the known Laws of God and Nature, more destructive to the Peace and Welfare of Mankind.

Lib. 7. de Offic. Proconf. in l. 1. ff. ad leg Jul. maj.

Hist. l. 4. c. 8. 489

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of their Penance, and the Diſcipline of the Ancient Church.

This, why laſt treated of. The Church as a Society founded by Chriſt, has its diſtinct Laws and Privileges. What the uſual Offences that came under the Church's Diſcipline. All Immorality open or confeſſed. Lapſing into Idolatry, the great Sin of thoſe Times. How many ways uſually committed. The Traditores *who, and their Crime. What Penalties inflicted upon delinquent Perſons. Delivering over to Satan, what. This extraordinary coercive Power, why veſted in the Church. The common and ſtanding Penalty by Excommunication. This practiſed among the ancient* Gauls. *An Account of it out of* Cæſar. *In uſe among the* Jews. *Thence derived to the* Chriſtians. *This Puniſhment how expreſſed by Church-Writers. Managed according to the Nature of the Fault. The Rigour of it ſometimes mitigated. Delinquent Clergymen degraded, and never admitted but to Lay-Communion. Inſtances of it. An Account of the Riſe of* Novatianiſm, *and the Severity of its Principles. Stiled* Cathari. *Condemned by the Synod at* Rome. *Offenders in what manner dealt with. The Procedure of the Action deſcribed by* Tertullian. *Penitents how behaving themſelves during their Suſpenſion.*

The greateſt not ſpared. The Caſe of Philippus *and* Theodoſius. *This Severity why uſed. Penances called Satisfactions, and why. The Uſe of the word* [Satisfaction) *in the ancient Fathers. Penitents how abſolved. After what Time. In the Power of Biſhops to extend or ſhorten theſe Penitentiary Humilitations. Four particular Caſes obſerved, wherein the Time of Penance might be ſhortned. In what ſenſe Communion is denied by ſome ancient Canons to Penitents at the Hour of Death. This Diſcipline adminiſtred primarily by Biſhops. By his Leave, Presbyters, and (in neceſſity) Deacons might abſolve. The publick Penitentiary when, and why inſtituted: when and why laid aſide. Penitents taken into Communion by Martyrs and Confeſſors. This Power abuſed to exceſs.* Cyprian's *Complaint of the exceſſive Numbers of Libels of Peace, granted by the Martyrs to the Lapſed without the Knowledge of the Biſhop. The Form of theſe Pacifick Libels exemplified out of* Cyprian. *Other Sorts of Libels. The* Libellatici, *who. The* Thurificati. *Several ſorts of* Libellatici. *The* Libellatici *properly ſo called. Their Manner of Addreſs to the Heathen Magiſtrate, to procure their Exemption from Sacrificing. That they did not privately deny Chriſt, proved againſt* Baronius. *The Piety and Purity of the Primitive Church, Matter of juſt Admiration.*

Having

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HAving travelled through the several Stages of the Subject I had undertaken, I should here have ended my Journey, but that there is one Thing yet remains, which was not properly reducible under any particular Head, being of a general relation to the whole; that is, to consider what Discipline was used towards Offenders in the antient Church: only premising this, That the *Christian* Church being founded and establish'd by *Christ* as a *Society* and *Corporation*, distinct from that of the *Commonwealth*, is by the very nature of its Constitution (besides what positive Ground and Warrant there may be for it in *Scripture*) invested with an inherent Power (besides what is borrowed from the *Civil* Magistrate) of censuring and punishing its Members that offend against the Laws of it, and this in order to the maintaining its Peace and Purity, For without such a fundamental Power as this, 'tis impossible that as a Society it should be able to subsist; the very nature of a Community necessarily implying such a Right inherent in it. Now for the better understanding what this Power was, and how exercised in the first Ages of the *Church*, we shall consider these four Things: What were the usual *Crimes* that came under the *Discipline* of the Antient Church; what *Penalties* were inflicted upon delinquent Persons; in what *Manner* Offenders were dealt with; and by *whom* this Discipline was administred.

First, What the usual *Crimes* and *Offences* were, which came under the Discipline of the antient Church. In the general, they were any Offences against the *Christian* Law, any Vice or *Immorality* that was either *publick* in it self, or made known, and made good to the Church. For the Holy and Good Christians of those times were *infinitely* careful to keep the Honour of their Religion unspotted, to stifle every Sin in its birth; and by bringing *Offen-*

Part III. ders to publick Shame and Penalty, to keep them from propagating the malignant Influence of a bad Example. For this Reason they watched over one another, told them *privately* of their *Faults* and Failures, and (when that would not do) brought them before the *Cognizance* of the Church. 'Tis needless to reckon up particular Crimes, when none were spared: Only because in those Days (by reason of the violent Heats of Persecution) the great *Temptation* which the weaker and more unsettled Christians were exposed to, was to deny their Profession, and to offer *Sacrifice* to the Heathen Gods; therefore lapsing into *Idolatry*, was the most common Sin that came before them; and of this they had very frequent Instances, it being that which for some Ages mainly exercised the Discipline of the Church. This Sin of Idolatry, or denying *Christ*, in those times was usually committed these three ways: Sometimes by exposing the *Scriptures* to the Rage and Malice of their Enemies, which was accounted a virtual Renouncing Christianity. This was especially remarkable under the *Diocletian* Persecution in the *African* Churches. For *Diocletian* had put forth an *Edict*, That *Christians* should deliver up their *Scriptures* and the Writings of the Church to be burnt. This Command was prosecuted with great Rigour and Fierceness, and many Christians to avoid the Storm delivered up their Bibles to the Scorn and Fury of their Enemies. Hence they were stiled *Traditores* (of whom there is frequent *Mention* in *Optatus* and St. *Augustine*) with whom the *Orthodox* refusing to join after the Persecution was over, the Difference broke out into Schism and Faction, and gave birth to that unhappy Sect of *Donatists*, which so much exercised the Christian Church. Otherwhiles, Christians became guilty of Idolatry by *actual* Sacrificing or Worshipping Idols; these were called *Thurificati*, from

from their burning *Incense* upon the Altars of the Heathen Deities, and were the grossest and vilest Sort of *Idolaters*. Others again fell into this Sin, by basely corrupting the Heathen Magistrate, and purchasing a *Warrant* of security from him, to exempt them from the Penalty of the Law, and the necessity of sacrificing and denying *Christ*; these were called *Libellatici*, of whom we shall speak more afterwards. Chap. 5.

Secondly, What *Penalties* and Punishments were inflicted upon delinquent Persons: And they could be no other than such as were agreeable to the Nature and Constitution of the Church; which as it transacts only in *spiritual* Matters, so it could inflict no other than *spiritual* Censures and Chastisements. 'Tis true indeed, That in the first Age especially, the *Apostles* had a Power to inflict *bodily* Punishments upon Offenders, which they sometimes made use of upon great Occasions; as St. *Peter* did towards *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, striking them dead upon the place, for their notorious Cozenage and gross Hypocrisy. And St. *Paul* punished *Elymas* with Blindness, for his perverse and malicious Opposition of the Gospel: And this doubtless he primarily intends by his *delivering over Persons unto Satan*; for no sooner were they excommunicated and cut off from the Body of the Faithful, but *Satan*, as the common *Serjeant* and Jaylor seized upon them, and either by actual possessing, or some other Sign upon their Bodies, made appear that they were delivered over into his Power. This could not but strike a mighty Terror into Men, and make them stand in awe of the *Censures* of the Church: And questionless the main Design of the Divine Providence in affording this *extraordinary* Gift, was to supply the Defect of civil and coercive Power, of which the Church was then wholly destitute, and therefore needed some more than *ordinary* Assistance, especially at its first Constitution; some visible

Part III. sible and *Jensible* Punishments, to keep its Sentence and *Determinations* from being slighted by bold and contumacious Offenders. How long this miraculous Power lasted in the *Church*, I know not; or whether at all beyond the Apostles Age. The common and standing *Penalty* they made use of, was *Excommunication* or Suspension from Communion with the Church; the *cutting* off and casting out an offending Person as a *rotten* and infected Member, till by Repentance and wholsome Discipline he was *cured* and restored; and then he was re-admitted into Church-society, and to a Participation of the Ordinances and Privileges of Christianity.

This Way of punishing by Excommunication, was not originally instituted by our *Lord*, or his Apostles, but had been antiently practised both amongst *Jews* and *Gentiles*. 'Twas commonly practised by the *Druides* (as *Cæsar*, who lived amongst them, informs us) who when any of the People became irregular and disorderly, presently *suspended* them from their Sacrifices. And the Persons thus suspended, were accounted in the Number of the most *impious* and *execrable* Persons. All Men stood off from them, shunned their Company and Converse as an *Infection* and a Plague; they had no Benefit of *Law*, nor any *Honour* or Respect shewn unto them: And of all *Punishments*, this they accounted most *extreme* and severe. So far he, giving an Account of this Discipline amongst the antient *Gauls*. In the *Jewish Church* nothing was more *familiar*; their three famous Degrees of *Excommunication*, נדוי *Niddui*, חרם *Cherem*, שמתא *Shammatha*, are so commonly known, that 'twere impertinent to insist upon them. From the Usage of the *Jewish*, it was, amongst other Rites, adopted into the *Christian* Church, practised by the *Apostles*, and the Churches founded by them (whereof we have Instances

De Bell. Gall. l. 6. p. 135.

Instances in the *New Testament*) but brought to greater *Perfection* in succeeding Times. 'Twas *variously* expressed by the antient Writers, though much to the same purpose. Such Persons are said *abstineri*, to be kept back, a Word much used by *Cyprian* and the *Synod* of *Illiberis*; ἀφορίζεσθαι, to be *separated*, or to be separated from the Body of *Christ*, as St. *Augustine* oft expresses it; ἐκκλείεσθαι τῆς κοινωνίας παντάπασιν, to be *wholly cut off* from Communion, as 'tis in the *Apostolick* Canons. Sometimes ἔκπτωτον εἶναι τῆς ἐκκλησίας, as the *Laodicean* Synod calls it, to be *thrown* out of the Church, to be *anathematized*, and without the Communion and Pale of the Church, as the Fathers of the Council of *Gangra* have it. Chap. 5.

Can. 28.

Epist. ad Armen. Episc. præfix. Conc. Gangr.

This Suspension, and the Penance that accompanied it, was greater or less, longer or shorter, according to the Nature of the Crime; sometimes two, three, ten, fifteen, twenty, or thirty *Years*, and sometimes for the whole Life; nay, in some Cases it was not taken off at Death, but Persons were left to the Judgment of God, without any *Testimony* of their Reconciliation to the Church. Though herein the Severity was mitigated, not only by private Bishops, but by the great Council of *Nice*; which ordained, That penitent Persons should not be denied the Communion at the Hour of Death. Of all which Cases, or the most material of them, we have in the foregoing Discourse produced particular Instances in their proper Places. If the Person offending happened to be in *Orders*, he forfeited his Ministery; and though upon his Repentance he was restored to Communion, yet it was only as a *Lay-person*, never recovering the Honour and Dignity of his Office. Thus *Cornelius* Bishop of *Rome* giving *Fabius* of *Antioch* an Account of the *Clancular* and *Schismatical* Ordination of *Novatian*, tells

Apud Euf. Hist. Eccl. l. 6. c. 43. p. 243.

Part III. tells him, That one of the Bishops that *ordained* him returned after to the Church, with Tears bewailing his Offence; whom, at the Instance of the People, he received into *Lay-Communion*. The same *Epist.* 52. *p.* 69. *Cyprian* writing about this very Case, relates of *Trophimus* (who was either the very Bishop mentioned by *Cornelius*, or one of his Collegues) that returning to the Church with great Demonstrations of Repentance he was re-admitted, but no otherwise than in the Capacity of a Lay-man. And speaking elsewhere of *Basilides*'s Repentance, he tells us, He had *Epist.* 68. *p.* 114. no Thoughts of retaining his *Bishoprick*; making account he was very well dealt with, if upon his Repentance he might but communicate as a *Laick*, and be received amongst the Number of the *Faithful*. This, St. *Basil* tells us, was an ancient *Canon* and *Epist. Can. ad Amphil. Can.* 3. *p.* 22. *Vide Zonar. & Balsam. in Can.* 10 *Conc. Nic.* Practice of the Church, and accordingly ordains, That a *Deacon* guilty of Fornication should be deposed from his Office; and being thrust down into the Rank of the Laity, should in that quality be admitted to Communion.

Indeed they strove by all ways imaginable to *discourage* Sin, never thinking the Curb strong enough, so they might but keep Persons within the Bounds of Order and Regularity; insomuch, that by some the String was stretched too far, and all Pardon denied to them that had sinned. This uncomfortable Doctrine was, if not first *coined*, yet mainly *vended* by the *Novatian* Party. For *Novatus*, St. *Cyprian*'s Presbyter, being suspended by him for his vile Enormities, fled over to *Rome*, and there joined himself to *Novatian*, a Presbyter of that Church (these two Names are frequently confounded by the *Greek* Writers) who ambitiously sought to make himself Bishop, and to thrust out *Cornelius* newly elected into that See; but not being able to compass his Design, between them they started this amongst

amongst other *heretical* Opinions, That the lapsed (who through fear of Suffering had fallen in the time of Persecution) were not to be admitted to Repentance; and that though they should ever so oft confess their Sins, and ever so sincerely forsake them, yet there was no Hope of Salvation for them: At least-wise (for so I incline to understand them) that it was not in the Power of the Church to absolve or give them any hopes of Pardon, leaving them to the Judgment of God; stiling themselves (and not only, as *Balsamon* affirms, *ironically* stiled by others) by the Name of *Cathari*, the *pure* and undefiled Party. But they were herein presently condemned by a *Synod* of sixty Bishops, and more than as many Presbyters and Deacons gathered at *Rome* (and the Decree consented to and published by the rest of the Bishops in their several *Provinces*) concluding, That *Novatus* and his Party, and all that had subscribed to his most *inhuman* and mercileſs Opinion, should be cast out of the Church; and that the Brethren, who in that sad Calamity had fallen from their Profession, should be healed and restored by the Arts and Methods of Repentance. Which brings us to consider,

Chap. 5.

Euſ. ubi ſupr. p. 242. *Epiph. Hær.* 59. *contra Catharos*, p. 214.

In Can 8. *Conc. Nic.*

Thirdly, How and in what *Manner* Offenders were dealt with, both as to their *Suspension* and *Penance*, and as to their *Absolution*. This Affair was usually managed after this Order: At their publick Assemblies (as we find in *Tertullian*) amongst other Parts of their holy Exercises, there were Exhortations, Reproofs, and a *divine Censure*; for the Judgment is given with great Weight, as amongst those that are sure that God beholds what they do: And this is one of the highest *Præludiums* and Forerunners of the *Judgment* to come, when the delinquent Person is banished from the *Communion* of *Prayers*, *Assemblies*, and all holy *Commerce*. By this Passage we

Ap. c. 39. p. 31.

Part. III. we clearly see, that the first thing in this solemn Action, was to make *Reproofs* and *Exhortations*, thereby to bring the Offender to the Sight and Acknowledgment of his Faults; then the *Sentence* or *Censure* was passed upon him, whereby he was suspended not only from the Communion of the Holy *Eucharist*, but from all holy Commerce in any (especially *publick*) Duty of Religion. We cannot imagine, that in every Person that stood under this Capacity, a formal Sentence was always denounced against him; it being many times sufficient, that the Fact he had done was evident and *notorious*, as in the case of the *lapsed* that had offered Sacrifice; for in this case the Offender was looked upon as *ipso facto* excommunicate, and all religious *Commerce* forborn towards him. 'Tis true, that in some Cases the *Martyrs* (as we shall see more anon) finding such lapsed Persons truly penitent, did receive them into *private* Communion: So did those Martyrs *Dionysius Alexandrinus* speaks of, in his Letter to *Fabius* Bishop of *Antioch*; they took the Penitents that had fallen into Idolatry into their Company, and communicated with them both at *Prayers* and *Meals*; but to *publick* Communion they were never admitted, till they had exactly fulfilled the Discipline of the Church, which principally consisted in many severe Acts of Repentance and Mortification, more or less according to the Nature of the Offence.

Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 6. c. 42. p. 241.

During this Space of *Penance*, they appeared in all the Formalities of Sorrow and Mourning, in a sordid and squalid Habit, with a sad Countenance, and a Head hung down, with *Tears* in their Eyes, standing without at the *Church-doors*, (for they were not suffered to enter in) falling down upon their Knees to the Ministers as they went in, and begging the Prayers of all good Christians for themselves, with all the Expressions and Demonstrations of

Tert. de pœnitent. c. 9. p. 127. Vide Euſ. l. 5. c. 28. p. 197.

of a sorrowful and dejected Mind, reckoning the *lower* they lay in Repentance, the higher it would exalt them; the more sordid they appeared, the more they should be cleansed and purified; the less they spared themselves, the more God would spare them. At these times also they made open *Confession* of their Faults, this being accounted the very Spring of Repentance, and without which they concluded it could not be real: *Out of Confession* (says *Tertullian*) *is born Repentance, and by Repentance God is pacified.* And therefore without this, neither Riches nor Honour would procure any Admission into the Church. Thus *Eusebius* reports, That when *Philippus* the Emperor would have gone in with the rest of the *Christians* upon *Easter-Eve*, to have partaked of the Prayers of the Church; the Bishop of the Place would by no means suffer it, unless he first made *confession* of his Sins, and passed through the Order of the *Penitents*, being guilty of very great and enormous Sins; which 'tis said he very willingly submitted to, testifying by his Actions his real and religious Fear of the Divine Majesty. This Story, though, as to the main of it, it might be true, yet as fastened upon *Philip* the Emperor, I have formerly shewed it to be false; and that it's rather meant of one *Philippus*, who was Governour in *Egypt*, and professed himself a *Christian*: But however this was, 'tis certain that a Person as great as he, *Theodosius the Great*, for his bloody and barbarous Slaughter of the *Thessalonians*, was by St. *Ambrose* Bishop of *Milan* suspended, brought to publick *Confession*, and forced to undergo a severe Course of Penance for eight Months together; when after great Demonstrations of a hearty Sorrow and sincere Repentance, not more rigidly imposed upon him, than readily and willingly received by him, after his usual Prostrations in the Church, (as if unworthy

Chap. 5.

Ibid.

Ib. l. 6. c. 34. p. 232.

Part III. worthy either to ſtand or kneel) crying out in the Words of *David*, *My Soul cleaveth unto the Duſt, quicken thou me according to thy Word*; after having often torn his Hair, beat his Forehead, watered his Cheeks with Tears, and humbly begged Peace and Pardon, he was abſolved, and reſtored to Communion with the Church: of which Paſſage, they who would know more, may find the Story largely related by *Theodoret*.

Hiſt. Eccl. l. 5. c. 15.

This Severity was uſed towards Offenders, partly to make them more ſenſible of their Sins, partly to affright and deter others; but principally to give *Satisfaction* both to God and his Church, concerning the Reality and Sincerity of their Repentance. Hence it is that theſe *Penances*, in the Writings of tho e times, are ſo often called *Satisfactions*: for whenever thoſe Fathers u e the Word, 'tis either with reſpect to *Men* or *God*; if to *Men*, then the meaning is, That by theſe external Acts of Sorrow and Mortification they *ſatisfy* the Church of their Repentance, and make reparation for thoſe Offences and Scandals which they had given by their Sins: If to *God*, then 'tis taken for the *Acknowledgement* of a *Man's* Fault, and the begging of Pardon and Remiſſion. Thus *Cyprian*, ſpeaking of the State of impenitent Sinners aggravates it by this, that they do *peccare, nec ſatisfacere*; ſin, but make no Satisfaction; *i. e.* (as in the very next Words he explains it) they do not *peccata deflere*, confeſs and bewail their Sins. And before, diſcourſing about God's being the only Object of Tears and Sorrow for Sin, which is to be addreſſed to God and not Man; he tells us, 'tis God that is to be appeaſed by Satisfaction, that he being greatly offended, is to be intreated by a long and full Repentance, as being alone able to pardon thoſe Sins that are committed againſt him. So that the Satisfaction which they reckoned they made

Aug. Enchirid. c. 65. tom. 3.

Ib. p. 173.

to

to God, consisted in seeking to avert his Displeasure, and to regain his forfeited Favour by a deep Contrition and Sorrow for Sin, by a real Acknowledgment and *forsaking* of their Faults, and by an humble giving to God the Glory both of his Mercy and his Justice. Thence Confession is called by *Tertullian* the *Counsel* or Intendment of Satisfaction. And a little after he describes it thus: *Confession* (says he) *is that whereby we acknowledge our Offence to God, not as if he were ignorant of it, but in as much as by Confession Satisfaction is forwarded, by Confession Repentance is produced, and by Repentance God is appeased.* The same both he, *Cyprian*, and others frequently use in the same Sense; which I note the rather, because of that *absurd* and *impious Doctrine*, so current amongst the Papists, and which they pretend to derive from these very Fathers, That by Works of Penance, *Compensation* is made to God for the Debt of Punishment that was contracted; whereby, at least, the temporal Penalties due to Sin are *meritoriously* expiated and done away. But this, besides that it is flatly repugnant to the Doctrine of *Antiquity*, how much 'tis derogatory to the *Honour* of Divine Grace, and the *infinite* Satisfaction of the *Son* of God, I shall not now stand to dispute. To return therefore: This Term of Penance was usually exacted with great Rigour, and seldom dispensed with, no Indulgence or Admission being granted till the full time was compleated. Therefore *Cyprian* smartly chides with some *Presbyters*, who had taken upon them to absolve the Lapsed before their time: And that whereas in lesser Offences Men were obliged to the just time of Penance, and to observe the Order of Discipline; they in a Crime of so heinous a Nature, had hand over head admitted them to Communion, before they had gone through their Penance and Confession, and fulfilled the regular Customs and Orders of the Church.

Chap. 5.

Tert. pœnitent. c. 18. *p.* 126, 127.

Ep. 9. *p.* 21.

Part III. The Time of Penance being ended, they addreſſed themſelves to the Governours of the Church for *Abſolution*; hereupon their Repentance was taken into Examination, and being found to be ſincere and real, they were openly re-admitted into the Church, by the Impoſition of the Hands of the Clergy: The Party to be abſolved kneeling down between the Knees of the *Biſhop*, or, in his Abſence, of the *Preſbyter*, who laying his Hand upon his Head ſolemnly bleſſed and abſolved him. Whence doubtleſs ſprang that abſurd and ſenſeleſs Calumny which the *Heathens* laid upon the *Chriſtians*, That they were wont *Sacerdotis colere genitalia*; ſo forward were they to catch at any Reproach which the moſt crooked and malicious Invention could inſinuate and ſuggeſt. The Penitent being abſolved, was received with the univerſal Joy and Acclamation of the People, as one returned from the State of the *Dead* (for ſuch, 'tis plain, they accounted them while under a State of Guilt, eſpecially the Lapſed; as *Cyprian* poſitively affirms them to be) being embraced by his Brethren, who bleſſed God for his Return, and many times wept for the Joy of his Recovery: Who upon his Abſolution was now reſtored to a Participation of the *Lord's-Supper*, and to all other Acts of Church-Communion, which by his Crimes he had forfeited, and from which he had been ſuſpended, till he had given ſatisfactory Evidence of his Repentance, and Purpoſe to perſevere under the exact Diſcipline of Chriſtianity. This was the ordinary way wherein they treated *Criminals* in the Primitive Church; but in Caſes of Neceſſity (ſuch as that of Danger of Death) they did not rigidly exact the ſet Time of Penance, but abſoved the Perſon, that ſo he might die in the Peace and Communion of the Church. The Story of *Serapion* at *Alexandria* we have formerly mentioned, who

Cypr. ep. 11 *p.* 24.

Id. Epiſt. 27. *p.* 39.

Vid. Epiſt. 46. *p.* 60.

Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl. 6. *c.* 44. *p.* 246.

who being ſuddenly ſurprized with Death while he was under the State of Penance, and not being able to die till he had received Abſolution; ſent for the Presbyter to teſtify his Repentance and abſolve him: But he being alſo at that time ſick, ſent him a Part of the *conſecrated* Elements, which he had by him; upon the receiving whereof, he breathed out his Soul with great Comfort and Satisfaction, that he now died in Communion with the Church. Chap. 5.

The Truth is, the Time of theſe *Penitentiary* Humiliations often varied according to the Circumſtances of the Caſe; it being much in the Power of the Biſhops and Governours of the Church to ſhorten the time, and ſooner to abſolve and take them into Communion; the *medicinal* Virtue of Repentance, lying not in the Duration, but the *Manner* of it, as St. *Baſil* ſpeaks in this very Caſe. A Learned Man has obſerved to my Hand, four particular *Caſes* wherein they were wont to anticipate the uſual time of *Abſolution:* The firſt was, (what I obſerved but now) when Perſons were in danger of Death; this was agreed to by *Cyprian* and the Martyrs, and the *Roman* Clergy, and the Letters (as he tells us) ſent through the whole World to all the Churches. This alſo was provided for by the great Council of *Nice*, That as for thoſe that were at the *point* of Death, the *antient* and *canonical* Rule ſhould be obſerved ſtill, That when any were at the *point* of Death, they ſhould by no means be deprived of the laſt and neceſſary *Viaticum*, *i. e.* the Holy Sacrament, which was their great *Symbol* of Communion. And here, for the better underſtanding ſome Paſſages, it may not be unuſeful once for all to add this Note; That whereas many of the antient *Canons* (of the *Illiberine* Council eſpecially) poſitively deny Communion to ſome Sorts of Penitents even at the hour

Can. 2. ad Amphil.

Forbeſ. inſtruct. Hiſt. Th. l. 12. c. 7. p. 674.

Ep. 52. ad Antonian. p. 67.

Can. 13.

Part III. *hour* of Death, they are not to be understood, as if the Church mercilesly denied all *Indulgence* and *Absolution* to any Penitent at such a time; but only that it was thought fit to deny them the use of the *Eucharist*, which was the great *Pledge* and Testimony of their *Communion* with the Church.

The second Case was in time of *imminent* Persecution, conceiving it but fit at such times to dispense with the Rigour of the Discipline, that so *Penitents* being received to the *Grace* of Christ, and to the Communion of the Church, might be the better armed and enabled *to contend earnestly for the Faith.* This was resolved and agreed upon by *Cyprian* and a whole Council of *African* Bishops, whereof they give an *Account* to *Cornelius* Bishop of *Rome*; That in regard *Persecution* was drawing on, they held it convenient and necessary, that Communion and *Reconciliation* should be granted to the *Lapsed*, not only to those that were a *dying*, but even to the *living*; that they might not be left naked and unarmed in the time of Battle, but be able to defend themselves with the Shield of *Christ's* Body and Blood. For how (say they) shall we teach and persuade them to shed their Blood in the *Cause* of *Christ*, if we deny them the Benefit of his Blood? How shall we make them fit to drink the *Cup* of Martyrdom, unless we first admit them in the Church to a right of Communication, to drink of the *Cup* of the Blood of Christ? A third Case wherein they relaxed the Severity of this *Discipline*, was, when great *Multitudes* were concerned, or such *Persons* as were likely to draw great Numbers after them: In this Case they thought it *prudent* and reasonable to deal with Persons by somewhat milder and gentler Methods, lest by holding them to Terms of Rigour and Austerity, they should provoke them to fly off either to *Heathens* or to *Hereticks*. This Course

Ep. 54. *p.* 76.

Cyprian

Cyprian tells us he took; he complied with the Necessity of the Times, and like a wise Physician yielded a little to the Humour of the Patient, to provide for his Health, and to cure his Wounds; and quotes herein the Example of *Cornelius* of *Rome*, who dealt just so with *Trophimus* and his Party: And elsewhere, That out of an earnest Desire to regain and resettle the Brethren, he was ready to connive at many things, and to forgive any thing, and did not examine and exact the greatest Crimes with that full Power and Severity that he might; insomuch that he thought he did almost *offend* himself in an over-liberal remitting other Mens *Offences*. Lastly, in absolving Penitents, and mitigating the Rigours of their Repentance, they used to have respect to the *Person* of the Penitent, to his *Dignity*, or *Age*, or *Infirmity*, or the *Course* of his past Life; sometimes to the Greatness of his *Humility*, and the Impression which his present Condition made upon him. Thus the *Ancyran* Council impowers Bishops to examine the manner of Men's Conversation and Repentance, and accordingly either to moderate or *enlarge* their time of Penance; but especially that regard be had to their Conversation both before and since their *Offence*, that so Clemency and *Indulgence* may be extended to them. So for the Case of Persons of more than ordinary *Rank* and *Dignity*, or of a more tender and delicate *Constitution*, *Chrysostom* determines, That in chastising and punishing their Offences, they be dealt withal in a more peculiar manner than other Men; lest by holding them under over-rigorous Penalties, they should be tempted to fly out in Despair, and so throwing off the Reins of Modesty, and the Care of their own Happiness and Salvation, should run headlong into all manner of Vice and Wickedness. So wisely did the Prudence and Piety of those Times deal with

Chap. 5.

Ep. 52. *ubi prius.*

Ep. 55. *p.* 85.

Can. 5. *Vi. Conc. Nic. Can.* 12.

De Sacerdot. l. 2. *c.* 4. *p.* 18. *tom.* 4.

Part. III. Offenders; neither letting the Reins so loose as to patronize *Presumption*, or encourage any Man to sin, nor yet holding them so strait as to drive Men into *Despair*.

The fourth and last *Circumstance* concerns the *Persons* by whom this *Discipline* was administred. Now though 'tis true, that this Affair was managed in the *publick* Congregation, and seldom or never done without the *Consent* and Approbation of the People (as *Cyprian* more than once and again expressly tells us;) yet was it ever accounted a *ministerial* Act, and properly belonged to them. *Tertullian*, speaking of Church-Censures, adds, That the *Elders* that are approved, and have attained that Honour, not by Purchase but Testimony, *preside* therein. And *Firmilian* Bishop of *Cæsarea* in *Cappadocia*, in a Letter to St. *Cyprian*, speaking of the *Majores natu*, the *Seniors* that preside in the Church, tells us, That to them belongs the Power of *Baptizing*, *Imposing Hands*, (*viz.* in Penance and *Ordination*.) By the Bishop it was primarily and usually administred; the *determining* the time and manner of Repentance, and the conferring Pardon upon the penitent Sinner, being Acts of the *highest* Power and Jurisdiction, and therefore reckoned to appertain to the *highest* Order in the Church. Therefore it is provided by the *Illiberine* Council, that Penance shall be prescribed by none but the *Bishop*; only in Case of Necessity, such as Sickness and Danger of Death, by Leave and Command from the Bishop, the *Presbyter* or *Deacon* might impose *Penance* and absolve. Accordingly we find *Cyprian*, amongst other Directions to his Clergy how to carry themselves towards the Lapsed, giving them this; That if any were overtaken with Sickness or present Danger, they should not stay for his coming, but the sick Person should make Confession of his Sins to the next *Presbyter*,

Apol. c. 39.

Inter epist. Cyp. 146.

Can. 32. *p.* 40.

Epist. 12. *p.* 25. *Vid. Conc.* 2. *Carthag. Can.* 4.

byter, or if a Presbyter could not be met with, to a *Deacon*; that so laying Hands upon him, he might depart in the *Peace* of the Church. Chap. 5.

But though while the Number of *Christians* was small, and the Bounds of particular *Churches* little, Bishops were able to manage these and other Parts of their Office in their own Persons, yet soon after the Task began to grow too great for them; and therefore about the time of the *Decian* Persecution, when Christians were very much multiplied, and the Number of the Lapsed great, it seemed good to the Prudence of the Church, partly for the Ease of the Bishop, and partly to provide for the Modesty of Persons, in being brought before the whole Church to confess every Crime; to appoint a *publick Penitentiary* (some Holy, Grave and Prudent *Presbyter*) whose Office it was to take the Confession of those Sins which Persons had committed after *Baptism*, and by Prayers, Fastings, and other Exercises of Mortification, to prepare them for Absolution. He was a kind of *Censor morum*, to inquire into the Lives of Christians, to take an Account of their Failures, and to direct and dispose them to Repentance. This Office continued for some Hundreds of Years, till it was *abrogated* by *Nectarius* (St. *Chrysostom*'s Predecessor in the *See* of *Constantinople*) upon the occasion of a notorious Scandal that arose about it. A Woman of good Rank and Quality had been with the *Penitentiary*, and confessed all her Sins committed since Baptism; he enjoined her to give up her self to Fasting and Prayer: But not long after she came to him and confessed, That while she was conversant in the Church to attend upon those Holy Exercises, she had been tempted to commit Folly and Lewdness with a *Deacon* of the Church; whereupon the *Deacon* was immediately cast out: But the People being exceedingly troubled

Socr. Hist. Eccl. l. 5. c. 19. p. 278. Confer. Zoz. l. 7. c. 16. p. 726.

Part III. at the Scandal, and the Holy Order hereby exposed to the Scorn and Derision of the *Gentiles*, *Nectarius*, by the Advice of *Eudæmon* a Presbyter of that Church, wholly took away the Office of the publick *Penitentiary*; leaving every one to the Care and Liberty of his own Conscience, to prepare himself for the Holy Sacrament. This Account *Socrates* assures us he had from *Eudæmon*'s own Mouth. And *Sozomen* adds, That almost all Bishops followed *Nectarius*'s Example, in abrogating this Office.

But besides the ordinary and standing Office of the Clergy, we find even some of the Laity, the *Martyrs* and *Confessors*, that had a considerable hand in *absolving* Penitents, and restoring them to the Communion of the Church. For the *understanding* of which, we are to know, That as the *Christians* of those times had a mighty Reverence for *Martyrs* and *Confessors*, as the great Champions of Religion, so the *Martyrs* took upon them to dispense in extraordinary Cases; for it was very customary in Times of Persecution for those, who through fear of suffering had lapsed into *Idolatry*, to make their Address to the Martyrs in Prison, and to beg Peace of them, that they might be restored to the Church: Who considering their *Petitions*, and weighing the *Circumstances* of their Case, did frequently grant their Requests, mitigate their Penance, and by a *Note* signified under their Hands, signify what they had done, to the Bishop; who taking an Account of their Condition, absolved and admitted them to Communion. Of these *Libelli*, or Books granted by the *Martyrs* to the *Lapsed*, there is mention in *Cyprian* at every turn; who complains they were come to that excessive Number, that *thousands* were granted almost *every day*. This many of them took upon them to do with great Smartness and Authority, and without that Respect that was due to the Bishops,

Ep. 10, 11, 12. *& alibi. Ep.* 14. *p.* 27.

Bishops, as appears from the *Note* written to *Cyprian* by *Lucian*, in the *name* of the *Confessors*; which because 'tis but short, and withal shews the Form and Manner of those *pacifick Libels*, it may not be amiss to set it down; and thus it runs: *All the Confessors to* Cyprian *the Bishop, greeting. Know that we have granted Peace to all those, of whom you have had an account what they have done, how they have behaved themselves since the Commission of their Crimes, and we would that these Presents should be by you imparted to the rest of the Bishops. We wish you to maintain Peace with the holy Martyrs. Written by* Lucian *of the Clergy, the Exorcist and Reader being present.* This was look'd upon as very peremptory and magisterial; and therefore of this Confidence and Presumption, and Carelessness in promiscuously granting these *Letters of Peace*, *Cyprian* not without reason complains, in an Epistle to the Clergy of *Rome*. Chap. 5. *Ep.* 16. *Ep.* 22. *p.* 34.

Besides these Libels granted by the *Martyrs*, there were *other Libelli* granted by *Heathen Magistrates*, (of which it may not be impertinent to speak a little) whence the lapsed that had them, were commonly called *Libellatici*, and they were of several Sorts: Some writing their Names *in libellis*, in Books, and professing themselves to worship *Jupiter*, *Mars*, and the rest of the Heathen Gods, presented them to the Magistrate; and these did *really* sacrifice, and pollute not their *Souls* only, but their *Hands* and their *Lips*, with unlawful Sacrifice, as the Clergy of *Rome* expresses it in a Letter to St. *Cyprian*; these were called *Thurificati*, and *Sacrificati*, from their having offered Incense and Sacrifices. Somewhat of this nature was that *Libel* which *Pliny* speaks of in his Epistle to the Emperor *Trajan*, presented to him while he was *Proconsul* of *Bithynia*; containing a Catalogue of the Names of many, some whereof had been accused to be *Christians* and denyed it; others confessed *Ep.* 31. 44. *Ad Antonian. ep.* 9. *p.* 66, 67. *Ep.* 97. *l.* 10.

Part III. fessed they had been so some Years since, but had renounced it; all of them adoring the Images of the Gods and the Emperor's Statue, offering Sacrifice, and *blaspheming Christ:* and were accordingly dis-
Ep. 31. *p.* 44. missed and released by him. Others there were, who did not themselves sign or present any such *Libels*, but some Heathen Friends for them, (and sometimes out of kindness they were encouraged to it by the Magistrates themselves) and were hereupon released out of Prison, and had the favour not to be
Can. 7. *Synodic. tom.* 2. *part.* 1. *p.* 12. urged to sacrifice. Nay, *Dionysius* of *Alexandria* speaks of some Masters, who, to escape themselves, compelled their *Servants* to do sacrifice for them; to whom he appoints a three Years Penance for that sinful compliance and dissimulation. A third Sort there was, who finding the edge and keenness of their *Judges* was to be taken off with a Sum of *Money*, freely confessed to them, That they were Christians and could not sacrifice, prayed them to give them a *Libel* of Dismission, for which they would give them a suitable Reward. These were most properly called *Libellatici* and *Libellati*. *Cyprian* acquaints us with the manner of their Address to the Heathen Magistrate, bringing in such a Person thus speaking for himself: I have both *read* and *learnt* from the Sermons of the *Bishop*, That the Servant of God is not to *sacrifice* to Idols, nor to *worship* Images; wherefore that I might not do what was unlawful, having an opportunity of getting a *Libel* offered, (which yet I would not have accepted, had it not offered itself) I went to the Magistrate, or caused another to go in my Name, and tell him, That I was a *Christian*, and that it was not lawful for me to sacrifice, nor to approach the Altars of the Devils; that therefore I would give him a Reward to excuse me, that I might not be urged to what was unlawful. These, though not altogether so bad as the *Sacrificati*, yet

yet *Cyprian* charges as guilty of *implicit* Idolatry having defiled their Consciences with the purchase of these Books, and done that by *consent* which others had *actually* done.

I know *Baronius* will needs have it (and he boasts that all that had written before him were mistaken in the Case) That these *Libellatici* were not exempted from denying Christ, nor gave Money to that end; that they only requested of the Magistrate, That they might not be compelled to offer Sacrifice; that they were ready to deny *Christ*, and were willing to give him a Reward to dispense with them only so far, and to furnish them with a *Libel* of Security; and that they did really deny him before they obtained their *Libel*. But nothing can be more plain, both from this and several other Passages in *Cyprian*, than that they did not either *publickly* or *privately* sacrifice to Idols, or actually *deny* Christ; and therefore bribed the Magistrate that they might not be forced to do what was unlawful. And hence *Cyprian* argues them as guilty by their *Wills* and *Consent*, and that they had *implicitly* denied *Christ*: How? by *actually* doing it? No, but by *pretending* they had done what others were really guilty of. Certainly the *Cardinal's* Mistake arose from a not right understanding the several Sorts of the *Libellatici*, the first whereof (as we have shewn) did *actually* sacrifice and deny *Christ*. *Annal. Ecc. ad An. CCLIII. num. XX. & seq. tom. 2.*

And now having taken this View of the Severity of Discipline in the Ancient Church, nothing remains, but to *admire* and *imitate* their Piety and Integrity, their infinite Hatred of Sin, their Care and Zeal to keep up that Strictness and Purity of Manners, that had rendered their Religion so renowned and triumphant in the World. A Discipline, which how happy were it for the *Christian* World, were it again re-settled in its due Power and Vigour!

which

Part III. which particularly is the *Judgment* and *Desire* of our *own Church* concerning the Solemn *Quadrageſimal* Penances and Humiliations: *In the Primitive Church* (ſays the *Preface* to the Commination) *there was a godly Diſcipline, That at the Beginning of Lent, ſuch Perſons as ſtood convicted of notorious Sin, were put to open Penance, and puniſhed in this World, that their Souls might be ſaved in the Day of the Lord; and that others, admoniſhed by their Example, might be the more afraid to offend. Which ſaid Diſcipline it is much to be wiſhed might be reſtored again.*

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FINIS.

A

CHRONOLOGICAL INDEX

OF THE

Authors Cited in this Book,

According to the Vulgar Computation.

With an Account of the Editions of their Works.

Christian or Ecclesiastical Writers.	*Flour. A. D.*	*Books.*	*Editions.*	
Apostolorum { Canones Constitutiones			Paris.	1618
Clemens Romanus	70	Epist. ad Cor.	Oxon.	1633
Dionysius Areopagita		Opera	Antw.	1634
Ignatius Antiochenus	101	Epistolæ.	Amst.	1646
		Append. Usher.	Lond.	1647
Polycarpus	130	Epistol.	apud Euseb.	
Abdias Babylonius		Histor. Apostol.	Par.	1566
Justinus Martyr	155	Opera.	Par.	1636
Smyrnensis Ecclesia	168	Epistol.	apud Euseb.	
Melito Sardensis	170	Orat. Apolog.	Par.	1636
Athenagoras	170	Legat pro Christ.	apud Euseb.	
Dionysius Corinth. Episc.	172	Epistolæ.	Par	1639
Theophilus Antioch.	180	Lib. 3 ad Autolyc.	Ibid.	
Tatianus	180	Orat. ad Græcos.	apud Euseb.	
Hegesippus	180	Commentar.	Par.	1639
Irenæus	184	adv. Hæreses.	apud Euseb.	
Polycrates Ephes. Episc.	197	Epistol.	Par	1644
Tertullianus	198	Opera.	Par.	1641
Clemens Alexandrinus	204	Opera.	Par.	1668
Minutius Fœlix	230	Octavius.	Par.	1522
Origenes	230	Opera Lat. contra Cels.	Cant.	1658
			Mogun.	1604
Gregorius Neocæsar.	250	Opera.	Par.	1668
Cyprianus	250	Opera.	apud Cypr.	
Cornelius Papa	250	Epistol.	apud Cypr.	
Firmilianus	250	Epistol.	apud Cypr.	
Pontius Diaconus	258	Vit. Cypr.		

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Christian or Ecclesiastical Writers	*Flour. A. D.*	*Books.*	*Editions.*	
Dionysius Alexandrinus	260	Epistol.	apud Euseb.	
Arnobius	297	adv. Gentes.	Par.	166
Lactantius	300	Opera.	L. Bac.	166
Commodianus	320	Instructiones.	Par.	166
Constantinus M.	325	Orat. ad SS.	apud Euseb.	
Eusebius Cæsarienſis	329	de Præp. Evang.	Par.	162
		Histor. Eccl.	Par.	165
		de locis Hebr.	Par.	163
		Chronic.	Amst.	165
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Julius Firmicus	350	de Error. Prof. Rel.	Par.	166
Optatus Milevitanus	365	de Schism. Donat.	Lond.	163
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Ambrosius	370	Opera.	Basil.	156
Basilius M.	370	Opera.	Par	163
Gregorius Nazianzenus	370	Opera.	Par.	160
Gregorius Nyssenus	380	Opera.	Par.	161
Epiphanius	390	Opera edit. Græc.	Basil.	154
Palladius	390	Histor. Lausiac.	Par.	155
Theophilus Alexandr.	390	Edit. de Theophan.	apud Balsam.	
Jo. Chrysostomus	400	Opera.	Par.	1639
		in N. T.	Heidel.	160
Hieronymus	400	Opera.	Basil.	1553
Asterius Amasenus	410	Homil.	apud Phot.	
Prudentius	405	Hymni.	Amst.	1631
Augustinus	410	Opera.	Basil.	1569
Innocentius Papa	416	Epistolæ Decret.	Par.	1355
Paulinus Nolanus	420	Epist.	inter Orthod.	
Paulinus Presbyter	420	Vit. Ambr.	apud Ambr.	
Severus Sulpititius	420	Hist. Sacr.	L. Bat.	1635
Maximus Taurinenſis	420	Homil.	Lugd.	1633
Philostorgius	425	Hist. Eccl.	Genev.	1643
Orosius	425	adv. Paganos.	Col.	1561
Possidius	430	Vit Augustin.	apud Aug.	
Isidorus Pelusiota	430	Epist.	Heidel.	1605
Jo. Cassianus	440	de Instit. Monarch.	Lugd.	1574
Socrates / Sozomenus	440	Hist. Eccl.	Par.	1668
Theodoretus	440	Hist. Eccl.	Genev.	1612
		Hist. Relig.	Par.	1555
		de Cur. Græc. aff.	Heidal.	1592
Eucherius Lugdunenſis	440	Mats. Theb. Leg.	apud Sur.	
Sidonius Appollinaris	486	Epist.	Hanov.	1617
Victor Uticenſis	490	de Persec. Vand.	Par.	1569
Jo. Malela	600	Chronic.	apud Usser.	
Gregorius M.	600	Opera.	Par.	1640
Photius	858	Bibliothec.	Rothom.	1653
		Nomocan.	Par.	1615
Ado Viennenſis	870	Martyrolog.	apud Sur.	
Suidas	880	Lexic.	Genev.	1618
Gregorius Presbyter	940	Vit. Naz.	apud Naz.	
Simeon Metaphrastes	1030	Vitæ Sanctorum.	apud Sur.	
Jo. Zonaras	1118	Schol. in Can.	Par.	1618
Const. Harmenopulus	1115	Epitom. Can.	ap. Jus. Gr. Ro.	
Alexius Aristenus.	1166	Schol. in Can.	in Synodic.	

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Christian or Ecclesiastical Writers.	Flour. A. D.	Books.	Editions.	
Theodosius Balsamon	1191	Schol. in Can.	in Synodic.	
Nicephorus Callistus	1310	Hist. Eccl.	Par.	1630
Matthæus Blastares	1335	Nomocan. Alphab.	Oxon.	1672
Josephus Ægyptius	1390	Paraphras. Arab. Conciliorum	Oxon.	1672
Josephus the Jew	70	Antiquit. Jud.	Genev.	1611

Heathen Writers.	Flour. A. D.	Books.	Editions.	
M. Varro, M. T. Cicero, Jul. Cæsar, C. Tacitus	ante Chr. Nat.			
C. Tacitus	98		Amst.	1649
Plinius Secundus	100	Epistol.	L. Bat.	1653
Suetonius	110	Vitæ Cæsar.	L. Bat.	1651
Brutius, Chronograph.			apud Euseb.	
Plutarchus	110	Opera.	Par.	1624
Celsus Epicureus	110	Serm. Verus.	apud Orig.	
Lucianus	110	Opera	Salm.	1618
Galenus	150	Oper. edit. Græc.	Ven.	1525
Arrianus	150	in Epictet.	Cant.	1655
M. Antoninus Imp.	161	de rebus suis.	Cant.	1652
Dion. Cassius	224	Hist. Rom.	Hanov.	1606
Ulpianus J. C.	230	de Offic. Procon.	in Digest.	
Porphyrius	280	de Abstinent.	Cant.	1655
Lampridius	290	Vit. Alex. Sev.	Hist. August.	
Vulcatius Gallicanus	290	Vit. Avid. Coss.	L. Bat.	1661
Julianus Imp.	361	Opera	Par.	1630
Eutropius	364	Hist. Rom.	int. Script. H.	
			Aug.	1568
Eunapius	370	de Vit. Philosoph.	Gen.	1616
Libanius	370	Orationes.	Par.	1627
Ammianus Marcellinus	370	Hist. Rom.	inter H. Aug.	
			Script.	1568
Vegetius	370	de re Milit.	Wesel.	1670
Symmachus	380	Epistol.	Lugd.	1598
Zosimus	410	Histor. Nov.	ad calc. Herod.	
			Lugd.	1611
Macrobius	422	Saturnal.	L. Bat.	1628
Simplicius	530	Com. in Epict.	L. Bat.	1640

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Maximianus	286	Honorius	395
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Late Writers.

R. Bellarminus
Cæſar Baronius
Ant. Gallonius
Gabr. Albaſpinæus
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H. Caſaubonus
Nic. Fuller
Joſ. Mede
Nic. Rigaltius
Onuphrius Panvinius
Deſid. Heraldus
Edw. Breerwood
Joan. Gronovius
Cl. Salmaſius
J. G. Voſſius
Jac. Gothofredus
Leo Allatius
Paulus Aringhius
Joan. Fronto
Joan. Forbes
Arch-Biſhop Uſher
Biſhop Taylor
Dr. Hammond
Herb. Thorndike
Mr. Daille.

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